Meeting of Sharlston Parish Council held on Monday 8th April 2024 at

Sharlston Community Centre at 6.30 pm

Present:

Cllr R Beacroft

Cllr P Belbin

Cllr P Boyes (Chair)

Cllr J Craig

Cllr J Nicholson

Cllr A Palmer

Cllr S Pollard

District Cllrs G Isherwood, M Tennant-King & S Vickers

2 members of the public

Prior to the meeting, the Chairman reminded all present of the Parish Council's expectations for the audio or visual recording of the meeting.

172. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies to note.

173. Declarations of Personal Interests

No members of the Council had any declarations or requests for dispensations.

174. Parish Council Vacancies

The Clerk confirmed that there had been no further interest in the current vacancies on the Parish Council.

175. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was proposed and RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 4th March 2024 be accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

176. Progress Report

The Clerk advised that the rota for getting Sharlston SID out and about in the village was still outstanding. It was agreed that this could be considered by the Highways Committee when they next met.
The Clerk had set up an Instagram account and linked this to the Parish Council's Facebook page.
The spring refresh of the community planters had taken place and these were now ready for the new plants. This item would be addressed under finance.
The Clerk had had a response from Wakefield Council to say they do not provide posts for signage. The Clerk asked if the Council wished pursue quotes to purchase these for the byelaw signs. Cllr Pollard suggested a post which was in place already that could be used and the Clerk was asked to provide a sign for this.
The Clerk had produced a Word version of the agenda item report and re-circulated this. It had also been posted in the Councillor Hub.

The new internal auditor had been appointed and the Clerk had a planned meeting with her on 16th April. The Clerk reiterated that there was lots of work to do for the year end as, in addition to the new auditor who would expectedly undertake a more in-depth review of the accounts, the Parish Council had also been selected as a sample to receive an intermediate review by the external auditor.
The Clerk had added an additional column within the budget for 2024/25 to identify legal costs associated with Parish Council projects.
A monthly contract with the website support company had been arranged. The Clerk had held an initial meeting with them on 2nd April and had agreed a plan going forward to update & improve the website. The Clerk also gave an update on domain specific emails for councillors. This would be quite an expensive undertaking as the government funding was only available for councils creating a new domain and Sharlston had had one for over 5 years now. The Clerk advised that as this had not been budgeted for in 2024/25, this should be revisited later in the year and preparation made for when this requirement becomes legislative.
An update was then given on the work required at the allotments. The Clerk confirmed that she now had three quotes for the tree pruning which was the urgent piece of work. As a budget for this work had been previously agreed, the Allotments Committee could now proceed with this work. A final quote was still awaited on the work to remove the concrete base / waste from the newest created plot and an update would be provided at the next meeting. The Clerk reminded the meeting that there was still an old fridge to remove and improvements to the front path to be made.
An induction pack for new councillors had been circulated and the Clerk had brought a small number of paper copies with her. She added a caveat that the documents would be updated from time to time so these must be returned to the Clerk after use.
The Clerk then provided an update on the forthcoming Open Day. West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue, the Community School, the Poppy Canopy project and first aid sessions were all confirmed. The Clerk asked for support in following up on other partners to ask for support / attendance.
The updated community survey was shared. This was agreed as ready to go out and it was suggested that councillors look at ways to circulate this ahead of the Open Day including quotes for a courier to do a drop around the village, businesses that could take some for pick up by residents and where councillors could drop these house to house. The Clerk agreed to set this up as an online survey to share on Facebook.
The meeting was issued a reminder that the Community Centre Management Committee should be aware of the new legislation around Martyn's Law.
The portrait of the King had been ordered and the Clerk would drop this off when it arrives for the Community Centre.
It was noted that the new noticeboard would be ordered when the new defibrillator purchase was agreed (under finance). The Clerk added that the Parish Council would need to appoint a contractor to do the electrics / fitting before the licence could be applied for from Wakefield Council.
With regards to the Pride Bench, the Clerk was awaiting a date and confirmation on the wording for a plaque from Wakefield Pride before this was ordered. The Clerk had met with the contractor and confirmed that the fitting of the bench would be no more than £250. It was also noted that on the bench, red should be at the top if possible so the Clerk would check on this.
The final Grounds Maintenance contract was still awaited from Wakefield Council.

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177. Ongoing Projects

Church / Community Centre

There had been no further update on the new lease between St Luke's Church & Sharlston Parish Council for Sharlston Community Centre.

Rugby Club

The final inspection of the extension to the changing rooms was still to be arranged and the Clerk confirmed that this could now go ahead as training was now back at the ground. The guidance on Martyn's Law would need to be shared with the Club as part of the inspection.

The Clerk had now received a new key for the outer gate of the grounds.

The weed spray on the car park was planned for later this month.

Taylor Wimpey transfer of land to Parish Council

Cllr Palmer was still to arrange a meeting to discuss a possible pétanque court on the largest piece of land. Cllr Craig agreed to support with this.

The Parish Council had received a request from a resident to consider the purchase of a laurel hedge to separate this piece of land from the Sports & Social Club playground. This was in place of the fence that had been damaged and taken down before Christmas. The Clerk advised that the Parish Council had been considering replacing the boundary before the fence had become damaged but as the pétanque project had since been agreed and was fully dependent on fundraising, there was currently no budget to purchase or replace any sort of boundary at present. Instead, the Parish Council was working closely with the Club to ensure their land was tidied and made safe in the meantime, including the removal of the old play area.

Purchase of Wakefield Council land at Clifton Road

The Clerk confirmed that two walks of the land and perimeter had taken place since the last meeting and any final queries answered as a result. The draw down of the funding from the PWLB had now been requested and was expected within the next fortnight. In preparation of this, the Parish Council's solicitor had forwarded the completion documents which had been signed by the Chairman, witnessed and returned.

The Clerk had researched the potential costs to remove, clear away the vacant garages on site and make good the ground and this was expected to be in the region of £2500 – 4000.

178. Reports from Committees

The Heritage & Environment Committee had taken place on Tuesday, 12th March. The following recommendations were made to the full Council:

- That in preparation for a 'history portal' to be created by the Parish Council, three members of the public who had shown interest in supporting this project, be invited to the next committee meeting to discuss this;
- That the Clerk contact the Heronry and Wakefield Parks to ask for support with the Parish Council's tree planting policy and plans;
- That a 'Bio-Blitz' project be planned for later in the year;
- That the Clerk contact local farmers to ask for interest in and support with a farming heritage project in the village.

It was RESOLVED that all these recommendations be agreed. Cllr Craig advised about funding from WDH which may be suitable for this project. The Clerk agreed to research this as well as possible opportunities with Nova, a local funding collaboration.

It was RESOLVED that the next Highways Walk/meeting would take place on Saturday, 20th April at 3pm starting at the Community Centre.

179. Training Update

The Clerk had booked Cllrs Nicholson & Pollard onto the Talking Tables training taking place later this month. She did however advise that due to current low numbers, this may need to be cancelled by the YLCA.

The Clerk had also booked to attend an Employment Law webinar the following week.

The Chair reminded all councillors to continue to seek training opportunities to ensure they remained skilled in their roles.

180. Items Requested by Councillors

The Clerk asked the meeting to think about whether it wished to change the current plans for the annual meal for older, vulnerable, lonely adults or those with dementia in the village. This had originally started as an autumn event at the Community Centre, building on the original luncheon club. It had however grown in recent years and now took place nearer to Christmas. Cllr Pollard advised that the Yorkshire Brasserie was currently able to sponsor the catering for the event, up to a maximum of 70 guests as this aligned with their desire to support dementia charities in the local community. This however provided a challenge to the Parish Council as the event was growing in popularity every year and not all guests now fit the 'criteria' to attend. It was suggested that as Yorkshire Brasserie had been unable to support the event in 2022 and the Parish Council had therefore funded the event itself, this was an option – if the Parish Council wished to allow more than 70 to attend, it could part fund the event to increase numbers. It was further suggested that the event be ticketed and a small entrance fee (minimum £2-3) could be charged which would be donated to dementia charities but would also help the Parish Council to control the numbers at the event.

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Pollard have a conversation with Yorkshire Brasserie in the first instance and that a decision be made at the next meeting on the future of the event.

The Clerk had previously circulated information regarding the move to bring bus services back under public control. It was acknowledged that there was still a number of issues with services to and from Sharlston and felt that the Parish Council should take action to lobby the relevant authorities about this. The Chairman suggested that the District Councillors be approached to support this via a letter to Mayor Brabin. In the meantime, it was RESOLVED that the Clerk create a Facebook post to collect individual experiences / issues with services in the village in order to create a case for the letter. A petition could also be organised if needed further down the line.

The Clerk then shared information about Our Year 2024. Councillors noted opportunities to access bursaries and grants to support local projects or support residents in accessing cultural venues and events in Wakefield, different activities on everyday in the district for little or no cost, monthly newsletters, support with promoting existing projects and promotional material to use in the village. The Clerk provided a number of posters, leaflets and booklets to be distributed around the village and agreed to continue to share relevant information.

With regards to Christmas 2024, it was RESOLVED to agree the two letters to new and existing businesses in the village about hosting a small, lit Christmas tree. These would now be printed for circulation. It was further RESOLVED to buy two sets of new Christmas lights for the trees at Sharlston Rovers. These could be tested at the D-Day event and further sets bought for Christmas if they were successful. It was also RESOLVED to order the two large trees for the village from Wakefield Council and to agree to manage the switch on for 2024 (to coincide with Featherstone on 27th November). A suggestion was made to offer the opportunity to switch on the lights as a raffle prize at the annual meal. Cllr Pollard confirmed that she had booked the singer for the Christmas Carol event on 20th December. It was RESOLVED to book the Community Centre for this event from 5.30 – 7.30 pm and to plan to sing 12 carols. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk make arrangements for a temporary event notice and to approach the Community School to be involved by playing instruments / singing at the service. Finally, it was RESOLVED that the Clerk approach contractors for quotes to complete the work to create an electric point for the rooted Christmas tree in advance of applying for a licence for the work.

It was RESOLVED to approve the Members Code of Conduct for a further twelve months.

181. Events/Attendance at Meetings

The Clerk shared details of the Mayor Making event from Featherstone Town Council. She also shared details of an Our Year event being held in conjunction with MY Hospital Trust. Finally, she shared details of the D-Day Civic event also been held by Featherstone Town Council. She agreed to share all events via email for interest.

The Clerk had advised Featherstone Town Council that the Parish Council would not be joining in with their events but had thanked them for the offer.

A report from the PACT meeting in March had been circulated to all councillors and the next one to be held on 16th April was noted.

Cllr Pollard provided a report on the Great British Spring Clean events that had taken place on 23/24 March. She also introduced a potential project – litter-free zones. The Clerk agreed to circulate information on this initiative and place it on the next agenda for consideration/decision.

The Clerk shared the minutes from the Town & Parish Council Liaison Group meeting which had taken place on 26th March. Items had included Climate Change / Biodiversity policies & actions, the forthcoming elections and getting involved and welfare/cost of living support. The Clerk had requested follow up support and would circulate information as it came back.

The meeting was made aware of a Banners Held High event taking place on 11th May and the Clerk agreed to share details via Facebook as this would be relevant to some residents given the links to Sharlston Colliery.

Finally, the Parish Council had been approached to support an event being held by Sharlston Rovers on the August Bank Holiday. It was RESOLVED to approve this and support in any way it could.

182. Planning Applications

There was one planning application to consider - 24/00221/FUL. This was discussed and it was RESOLVED to make an objection to this application on the basis that the Parish Council has historically objected to two previous similar applications, both of which

have been refused planning permission and dismissed on appeal by the Secretary of State within the last 24 months as the development is harmful to the Green Belt. The Parish Council has also monitored the planning activity over several years and because of local concerns by residents is surprised that the enforcement notice requiring removal of the unauthorised building on the site has not been actioned.

183. Planning Decisions

There were no planning decisions to note.

184. Correspondence

The Clerk had previously circulated a list of correspondence from March. Items received after this included:

06.04.24	Wakefield Council	Things we think you'd like to know
06.04.24	YLCA	CEX Bulletin
06.04.24	YLCA	Information Bulletin & Training 05.04.24

It was suggested that Cllr Pollard speak to the chemist about the issues raised by a resident, when she visited about the Christmas tree.

185. Summary of Projects for Publication

It was suggested that key updates continue to be shared via Facebook. The Clerk had noted the following to share; Banners Held High, Bus issues, PACT.

186. Future Agenda Items

The Clerk reminded everyone to forward any items seven days in advance of agenda preparation which for the next meeting was 5th May.

187. Financial Matters

The Clerk advised on the balances for the Parish Council's two back accounts as at the end of March 2024. It was noted that this was also the year end position.

The Clerk had previously circulated a bank reconciliation to 31st March 2024.

The following accounts were then approved for payment.

Supplier	Details	Amount/Type
YLCA	Membership 2024/25	795.00 bank transfer
PDF Simple	PDF to word software	41.90 card
On Screen	Google Workspace licence and Feb + March Monthly Charge for web support	160.00 bank transfer
Emma King	Expenses March 24	59.09 bank transfer
K&B Landscapes	Cut back of trees at Rugby Club (EMERGENCY SPEND)	810.00 bank transfer

The following payments had been previously approved and made between meetings.

Supplier	Details	Amount/Type
Emma King	Salary	
Zoe Kozlowski	Salary	
Zoom	Monthly subscription	15.59 card
Three	Clerk's Mobile Phone	29.40 DD

The Clerk then advised that she would be on her final increment of her salary scale from 28th April 2024.

The Clerk then reported on the Community Infrastructure Levy funds received by the Parish Council since 2016. This amount was £4412.68.

Cllr Pollard had provided costings for the replacement of plants in the community planters including the necessary compost. This amounted to £618.75 plus delivery. It was RESOLVED to purchase these plus additional compost to re-position the trees on the Common once the framing was removed. It was further noted that the asset register would need updating now that the damaged planter had been removed.

It was RESOLVED to purchase a new defibrillator, cabinet and responder pack from St John's Ambulance at a cost of £1929.00.

The grant application from Sharlston Cricket Club was still awaited.

188. Date & Time of Next Meeting

The annual meeting meeting was RESOLVED as Monday, 13th May 2024 at 6.00 pm.

There being no other business the Chair thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 9.00 pm

Signed ……. Chairman

Date ……..

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