Meeting of Sharlston Parish Council held on Monday 1st July 2024 at

Sharlston Community Centre at 6.30 pm

Present: Cllr R Beacroft
Cllr P Belbin
Cllr J Craig
Cllr J Nicholson
Cllr S Pollard (Chairperson)
2 members of the public

Standing orders were suspended until 7.12 pm to allow members of the public to finish speaking.

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

40. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr A Palmer and the reason for absence was accepted.

41. Declarations of Personal Interests

There were no applications for dispensations.

There were no new declarations of interest.

42. Parish Council Vacancies

The Clerk advised that all 5 current vacancies were now open to co-option. She also reminded the meeting that recruitment would now be a standing item on the agenda as it was a key priority for the Parish Council to increase capacity.

43. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was proposed and RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd June 2024 be accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairperson. The Clerk reminded the meeting that any changes to the minutes needed to be sent to her no later than seven days before the next meeting.

44. Progress Report

National Volunteer Week had been shared on Facebook. The Clerk had also made an approach to local organisations NOVA & Citizen Coin about how the Parish Council could get involved & receive guidance/support from them regarding volunteering. This would also hopefully help with funding enquiries. A response had been received from Nova and the Chairperson offered to follow this up if the Clerk forwarded details to her.
The final byelaw sign was still to be moved from the telegraph pole on Cllr Palmer's return.
The Heathers to Fernside warning sign had been fitted.
The Parish Council had received a request from Sharlston Rovers Rugby Club to support with a letter to be placed on cars not observing careful or considerate parking. The Clerk agreed to type up the suggested wording and email / print copies of this for the Chairperson to hand to the Club. It was suggested that the Club might also want to consider purchasing some signage for the perimeter fence with the same message.

The asbestos sheet had been removed from the allotments using emergency spend and had been noted under payments as such.
The communication strategy item had been referred to the Parish Plan Committee and would be led by the outcomes of the recent community survey and Open Day feedback.
The Chairperson had spoken to Cllrs Beacroft & Craig to aid their understanding of the Parish Councillor Hub and how this should be used.
All Parish Council policies would be added to the website over the summer.
Cllr Belbin was still to look at the link between the Parish Council's Facebook & Instagram pages.
The weed spray at the Rugby Club car park was still being chased by the Clerk. Cllr Nicholson made a point about Wakefield Council withdrawing the use of all weed killers at present to support the national drive to improve biodiversity which might explain the delay in this service.

45. Ongoing Projects

Church / Community Centre

There was no further update from the Diocesan solicitors on this matter. The Clerk continued to pursue a response / update on the creation of a new lease.

Taylor Wimpey transfer of land to Parish Council

The Parish Council continued to work with the Sports and Social Club to sign the lease for the strip of land at the side of the Club and on speaking with the owner of the Club it had been discovered that the lease was being sent to the wrong company. The Clerk had updated the solicitors and asked them to reissue the lease for signing.
A meeting had taken place between several councillors and the Yorkshire Pétanque Club on 5th June and lots of information had been shared regarding the scope of work required to create the ground. A similar project was underway in Sherburn in Elmet and the Parish Council had been invited to visit the site to see this. An invitation had also been made to visit games taking place in other areas to see the game in action. From this information, costings could now be worked up by the Parish Council.
The Chairperson had also spoken with a number of potential funding bid writers in order to research this as an option. One of these had raised a potential issue in obtaining funding for the pétanque project as there had not been a public consultation on this as an option for the land.
The Chairperson therefore proposed that the project be halted until this could be arranged.
The Chairperson had also collected a number of quotes to replace the fencing on the Heather's pavement side section due to the current fence being damaged. The Clerk advised that whilst this was useful research, she would advise against this meeting making a decision on the fencing and suggest it be placed on the next meeting. A question was raised about whether the quotes obtained were for fencing that would be sympathetic to the pétanque project should that go ahead and it was noted that they were. A point was made about not being able to secure funding retrospectively should the fencing be erected before the project. It was therefore proposed and RESOLVED that the future use and security of the land be an item for decision at the next meeting. The Chairperson then raised her concerns over the state of the current fencing which she believed was dangerous. It was suggested that it be arranged to remove this.
The Chairperson then raised concerns that this would leave the land vulnerable to illegal parking or even encampment. The Clerk noted that this is why the item required further consideration.
It was proposed and RESOLVED that only the dangerous part of the fence be removed for now under emergency spend. The Chairperson offered to remove the fence with Cllr Palmer the following week and the Clerk agreed to make arrangements for removal then.

Land at Clifton Road

The rental amount paid by one tenant had been located and returned by Wakefield Council and subsequently returned to the Parish Council by the solicitors. The Clerk would now return this to the former tenant. No response had been received by one tenant by the deadline of 1st July and so now all four garages could be demolished. Three quotes were shared for decision. It was proposed and RESOLVED to award the tender and the Clerk agreed to arrange this work before the next meeting.
Wakefield Council had confirmed that the grate adjacent to the garages was now the Parish Council's responsibility. As this was damaged and in need of repair, it was recommended that the Clerk seek a quote from the successful contractor for the garages and proceed to get this repaired at the same time.

46. Reports from Committees

Allotments Committee

A follow up inspection at the allotments with a tenant that had been unavailable for the original inspection, had taken place on 9th June. Whilst some small progress had been made, there were still concerns about this plot and the tenant had been given advice on where to improve and told that spot checks would be made before the next formal inspection in October.

Japanese knotweed had been reported on another plot and remedial action was now recommended to remove and prevent this from returning. It was proposed and RESOLVED that this be undertaken but that the tenant must take responsibility to keep this under control in the future.

Another tenant had given notice to terminate their tenancy and the next person on the waiting list had been contacted and had viewed the plot. The Allotment Policy had been sent to them and they would confirm shortly if they wanted to start a new tenancy.

Finance & Personnel Committee

The Finance & Personnel Committee meeting had taken place on 10th June. The following items had been covered; previous meeting notes (approved at the following Parish Council meeting), budget position and known commitments and budget proposals linked to the Parish Plan. The Clerk's annual appraisal had also been conducted and signed at the meeting.

Parish Plan Committee

The Parish Plan Committee meeting had taken place on 17th June. The notes of the meeting had been circulated to all councillors. The following items were presented for recommendation:

That the Clerk pull together a list of outstanding Highways issues to share with the Parish Council and that she drafts a letter to the Highways Department requesting an update / timeline for actions to be taken. It was also recommended that the District Councillors be copied in and asked to support this request.

That a list of actions be agreed ahead of each Parish Council meeting that require support from the District Councillors so that their attendance at monthly meetings can be utilised effectively.

That consideration be given to changing the current Parish Plan into a Neighbourhood Plan that could be led more by the community and which would also hold a statutory status and attract funding as such.

That the current plan be streamlined into suggested objectives and given timelines, budgets, resources required (including key personnel) and evaluation measures.

That the Clerk develop a key contractors list to present to the Finance Committee in September 2024 for approval.

That a key dates calendar for the Parish Council be created to include all meeting dates as well as project timelines.

That feedback from the recent Open Day and the Community Survey be included / fed into the Parish Plan.

It was proposed and RESOLVED to proceed with these actions. The Clerk was asked to include the Wakefield District school parking strategy in her highways round up. It was noted that the Parish Council would need to be really clear on the rationale for changing the Parish Plan to a Neighbourhood plan and that research should be thorough and not rushed.

Heritage & Environment Committee

The Heritage & Environment Committee meeting had taken place on 24th June. The notes of the meeting had been circulated to all councillors. The following items were presented for recommendation:

That all environment items on the agenda be deferred to a separate meeting with an environment focus.

That the Parish Council commence a project based on 'Tales of Sharlston' which will be informed by a group of volunteers in the village and comprise memoirs about our village.

That this include various mediums; the written word, recordings, photographs, scanned documents, social media content etc. and that this will be a long-term project, it was suggested to have a five-year plan to culminate in the 100th anniversary of the Parish Council in 2029.

That an initial event be organised (daytime and at the Sports & Social club) with refreshments, where residents can be invited to come and share stories, exhibits, memories etc. for recording.

That a WhatsApp group be started amongst volunteers to start and collect ideas / history / memories.

Cllr Nicholson was also asked to look into setting up a tik-tok account to showcase and share work from this project.

That Cllr Craig's daughter be approached to see what, if any support she could offer to the project given her strong interest and skills in this area.

That Our Year 2024 & local council funding be explored to support this – initial outlay may include equipment such as a tablet with software to record the spoken word / turn into text, refreshments etc.

It was proposed and RESOLVED to proceed with these actions. It was suggested that the initial event take place in the spring so that progress could be made between now and then. It was also suggested that Cllr Nicholson look at creating a flyer for the project to be agreed at the next meeting. Cllr Belbin agreed to do initial research on the software required.

Annual check on Parish assets

The Chairperson agreed to accompany the Clerk on her annual check of Parish assets over the summer.

YLCA Joint Annual Meeting

Cllr Craig agreed to try and attend this event on 20th July and the Clerk agreed to forward all information.

Town & Parish Council Liaison Group

The Chairperson and Clerk would attend the next meeting of the Town & Parish Council Liaison Group on 30th July.

47. Training Update

Cllr Nicholson had attended the YLCA South Pennine Branch meeting on 5th June and gave feedback including on the presentation on biodiversity which had been subsequently shared with all councillors.
The Chairs Discussion on 25th June had been cancelled.
Cllr Nicholson would be attending the Talking Tables Regional Day on 18th July with the Clerk.
Cllr Nicholson would also be attending the Green Belt training on 24th July.

48. Items Requested by Councillors

Empower your Council with Technology App
The Clerk advised that her initial trial with this app had proved useful and she was happy to recommend the purchase to the Parish Council. It was proposed and RESOLVED to progress this.

Annual report from the Community Centre Management Committee
Cllr Nicholson gave a verbal report from the annual meeting of the Community Centre Management Committee. It was noted that rental for users would be increased by £1 an hour in 2024/25 and parties would increase to £15 an hour. The caretaker's hours had increased due to more usage of the centre and there were still a number of repairs required. The Committee was currently investigating funding for a new floor and upgraded kitchen facilities.

Results of the Community Survey 2024
Cllr Beacroft was thanked for pulling together the results of the community survey. It was proposed and RESOLVED that a summary be published on the Parish Council's website and Facebook page as well as on the Parish notice boards. The Clerk was asked to print a few hard copies for circulation to local residents on request.
The Clerk had sought clarification from Wakefield Council on the number of households in the village and shared this with the meeting.

Promotion of the village health walks for Summer 2024
It was proposed and RESOLVED to remove the current QR codes for the walks due to unforeseen, ongoing costs to maintain these. It was proposed and RESOLVED to move the information on the walks to a more prominent position on the website and to offer guided walks with Parish Councillors over the summer, to be promoted via Facebook. The QR codes would be removed during the asset check.

Bulb sponsorship letter for autumn 2024
It was proposed and RESOLVED to approve the bulb sponsorship letter with minor changes. The Clerk agreed to update and print copies for circulation to businesses over the summer.

Plans to re-site the Parish notice board and fit the new defibrillator in New Sharlston
The Clerk explained the process required for the new defibrillators to be fitted and connected to an electricity supply. It was proposed and RESOLVED that she explore costs for solar supply and bring these for agreement in September 2024.
In the meantime, the Clerk was asked to proceed with the order and re-siting of the new notice board.

Christmas 2024

The Clerk advised that she was working with the contractor who fitted the small trees to identify where outside sockets and new trees were required. Once this information was received, she would seek costs for this work and bring these to the next meeting for approval. She updated the meeting that a local photography business had confirmed they wanted to sponsor a tree and the Chairperson confirmed that the pharmacy would sponsor two trees.

Policies

It was proposed and RESOLVED to approve the following policies for a further twelve months:

- Standing Orders
- Recruitment & Selection Policy
- Grievance & Disciplinary Policy
- Flexible Working Policy
- Computer Use Policy
- Annual Leave Policy
- Workplace Drug & Alcohol Policy
- Training & Development Policy
- Sickness and Absence Policy
- Performance Appraisal Policy
- Pensions Policy
- Mobile Phone Use Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Equality Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Bullying & Harassment Policy
- Asset Register/Inspection Checklist

49. Events/Attendance at Meetings

The Clerk was asked to share the Parish Council's sponsorship of the recent poppy canopy project with the YLCA for publication.

The following events were noted:

- Featherstone Town Council – Annual Town Gala & Parade – 6th July 12.15pm
- Morley Town Council – Mayor's Civic Service 7th July 10.30 – 11.30 am
- Normanton Town Council – Party in the Park 18th July – Cllr Nicholson to attend
- Normanton Town Council Summer band concert – 28th July
- Normanton Town Council – 60th Annual Gala Weekend 14/15 September

Pride bench

This had been ordered and quotes for fitting were shared. It was proposed and RESOLVED to get the bench fitted ahead of the 20th anniversary of Wakefield Pride on 11th August.

50. Planning Applications

An objection to one application was proposed and RESOLVED and the Clerk was asked to submit this on the Parish Council's behalf.

An issue relating to the removal of a hedgerow had been brought to the Parish Council's attention. The Clerk was asked to report this to the rural police team and the Environment Agency once full details had been sent to her.

51. Planning Decisions

There were no planning decisions to note.

52. Correspondence

The Clerk had previously circulated a list of correspondence from June. Items received after this were advised. An email from a member of the public about inconsiderate parking near the school was noted and a suitable response agreed.

Councillors were reminded that it was now their responsibility to request items of correspondence and to log into the YLCA website weekly.

53. 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; summary of community survey, pride bench, planters, Chairperson's update, village health walks.

54. Future Agenda Items

The Clerk reminded everyone to forward any items to her by 25th August.

55. Financial & Employment Matters

The Clerk advised on the balances for the Parish Council's two bank accounts as at the end of June 2024.

The Clerk circulated the cashbook for June 2024 and a bank reconciliation to 30th June 2024.

The following accounts were then approved for payment.

Supplier	Details	Amount/Type
Asbestos Consultancy Management Ltd.	Removal of asbestos sheet from allotments (emergency spend)	£192.00 bank transfer
Wakefield Council	TEN Notice for Carol Event	£21.00 card
Defibstore	Replacement defib pads	£79.20 card

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	30.72 DD

It was proposed and RESOLVED to approve publication, printing and distribution of 500 annual reports and to have these available at Open Day.

Bid writing had been covered earlier in the meeting.

Unfortunately, not all quotes for new fencing and improvements to the pathway at the allotments had been received. It was proposed and RESOLVED to organise an extraordinary meeting once these were received so as to progress this work.

It was proposed and RESOLVED to encourage the Community School to complete a grant application in order to purchase anti-parking bollards.

A grant application from Sharlston Rovers Juniors towards the cost of new kits was then considered. It was proposed and RESOLVED to approve this.

56. Date & Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting was RESOLVED as Monday, 2nd September 2024 at 6.30 pm.

There being no other business the Chairperson thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 9.05 pm

Signed *Susan Pollard* Chair

Date 2nd September 2024