Meeting of Sharlston Parish Council held on Monday 3rd February 2025 at

Sharlston Community Centre at 6.30 pm

Present: Cllr P Belbin

Cllr J Craig

Cllr D Hampshire

Cllr J Nicholson

The Chairperson reminded all present of the Parish Council's expectations for the audio or visual recording of the meeting. Cllr Hampshire recorded the meeting (audio only) on her mobile phone

The Clerk advised that there was currently no Chairperson or Vice Chairperson in place and advised that she had received one nomination for Chairperson – Cllr Belbin. She asked if there were any further nominations. In the absence of any other nominations, it was proposed and ***RESOLVED*** *that Cllr Belbin be elected Chairperson until the Annual Meeting.*

110. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

111. Declarations of Personal Interests

There were no new applications for dispensations.

There were no new declarations of interest.

112.Parish Council Vacancies

The meeting noted the resignation of Susan Pollard and the Clerk confirmed the process for notifying this casual vacancy to the Local Authority. Councillors highlighted their unanimous thanks to Mrs Pollard for her contribution to the Parish Council and the Community. The Clerk suggested that the letter of thanks be placed on the Hub so that councillors could make any amendments to this before she sent this to Mrs Pollard.

The Clerk then advised that Cllr Andy Palmer had decided not to progress with his resignation and instead had requested to take some time away from the Parish Council to concentrate on other commitments. The Clerk had sought advice from the YLCA on how to manage this and would report back in due course. It was proposed and **RESOLVED** that the leave of absence should be reviewed after three months.

There were no new applications to consider but it was noted that there were a number of residents interested in applying.

Councillors then considered a review of Parish Councillor numbers and suggested that 8 would be a more appropriate number. The Clerk was asked to seek further advice on how this may be achieved.

113.Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was proposed and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meetings held on 2nd December & 6th January be accepted as true records and these were signed by the Chairperson.

114.Progress Report

- It was noted that Cllr Craig was still to undertake identity checks to become a signatory on the Parish Council accounts.
- The Clerk advised that she had two potential contractors who were interested and qualified to quote to re-site the noticeboard at New Sharlston. The District Councillors were asked to support with finding a third contractor.
- The Clerk had advised the resident on the most up to date position with the hedgerow removal at a farm in New Sharlston.
- The Clerk had created a post about the new wildlife signs on the Green, the new defibrillator and the grants provided by the Parish Council. She asked for support with creating a post to advertise the winter health walks.
- Details of all grants had been shared on the Hub.
- The report from the autumn allotment inspection was still awaited. Advice had been given to tenants on the recent avian flu outbreak.
- Information on Citizen Coin had been noted as part of the forthcoming Open Day.
- It was noted that Cllr Nicholson was still to provide a report on the benefits of CPRE membership.
- The Clerk had ended the Parish Council's Zoom subscription.
- The details of the PWLB Loan had been re-shared on the Hub.
- The Clerk had followed up and received dates for potential CPR training sessions at the Community Centre and had sent these to Cllr Nicholson to check on availability. Cllr Nicholson expressed caution with proceeding unless a Councillor could take a lead on this and manage the sessions. It was proposed and **RESOLVED** to place this on next month's agenda.
- The donation to the Alzheimer's Society in lieu of the Christmas meal had been made.
- All correspondence had been shared as requested.
- The CCTV Service had been completed. The Chairperson agreed to hold onto the spare keys to access the equipment.
- The Parish Council's insurance had been renewed.

115.Ongoing Projects

Church / Community Centre

The Clerk advised that the Diocesan solicitors had written to the Parish Council saying they were happy to meet to discuss the future of the Community Centre. The details had been shared on the Hub for comment. A discussion was held and the following highlighted:

- The Parish Council seeks a formal offer of sale if this is now being offered as an option, so that it can be considered alongside a lease renewal.
- Any sale price would need to take into consideration how much financial support the Community Centre Management Committee has given to the Centre in the last 7 years since the lease ended and during the lease period which ended in 2018.
- A renewed lease, on the same basis as the previous one (peppercorn) is still required urgently as, without this, the Management Committee is unable to apply for funding to make much needed repairs & improvements to the Centre.
- The point needs making that as the offer of buying the Centre wasn't made originally, the Parish Council has since taken a decision to purchase land at Clifton Road with the potential to provide future community space.

The Clerk was asked to communicate these points and request availability for a meeting as soon as practical to include equal representation from either party.

Heathers' Land

It was agreed that no further discussion on the development of the Heather's land could take place until the public consultation had taken place. Due to capacity on the Parish Council, it was proposed and **RESOLVED** that the consultation take place as part of the Open Day on Saturday, 17th May. It was suggested that this could be followed by further engagement opportunities to ensure all the community had chance to feedback on ideas. The Chairperson agreed to lead on pulling together potential options including detail on how realistic each one was. He agreed to start this process in the Hub and welcomed comments / input from all Councillors.

Land at Clifton Road

Although it was noted that this land would also be part of the public consultation, the Clerk reminded the meeting that there was an outstanding action related to a pot hole on the land. Cllr Hampshire agreed to seek further advice on this matter and report back to the next meeting.

116.Reports from Committees

The Clerk shared the current committee list and the necessary changes were made following the recent resignation of Susan Pollard. It was reiterated that until capacity increased on the Parish Council, all committee meetings would be open to all Councillors. The Clerk advised that if the Council were happy with reducing their focus to existing projects, business should be able to take place in full Council meetings until capacity increased.

117.Training Update

No training had taken place since the last meeting. The Clerk shared the following opportunities for consideration:

- YLCA Regional Training Day, 21st March 2025. Cllrs Nicholson & Hampshire expressed interest in attending.
- Flying Start training, the Clerk noted that Cllr Hampshire would need to book onto these sessions when convenient.
- Business Fire Safety Responsibilities and Update from South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Services, 11th February 2025.

The Clerk was asked to share details in the Hub as well as re-issue YLCA log-in details to all Councillors.

The Clerk also shared feedback from the Town & Parish Council Liaison Group meeting that had taken place on 3rd December. She noted that there were items on the agenda as a result; an updated Lone Workers Policy and an update on the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's electoral review of Wakefield Council.

118.Items Requested by Councillors

Final Recommendations on the New Electoral Arrangements for Wakefield Council from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England

The Clerk advised that this review was now complete and shared the report & accompanying map. She agreed to place this in the Hub for further review if required.

Lease Agreement for the sharing of the Parish Council's Speed Indicator Device and Use

The Clerk had previously shared a draft agreement and highlighted two sections in particular relating to a suggested deposit and a 'failure to return' clause. It was proposed and **RESOLVED** that the agreement be accepted. Cllr Craig agreed to share this with interested parties and report back on further use of the device. It was noted that consideration would need to be given to when the device could be collected and returned to minimise impact on Councillors and Centre users.

Policies for Review

It was proposed and **RESOLVED** that the following policies be agreed for a further twelve months:

- Tendering Policy (NEW). It was noted that this was subject to agreement of a Designated Contractors List and following in principle for any contracts under £25k.
- Allotments Policy (including tenancy agreement). This was subject to one small change – increasing the suggested probation period to three months.
- Allotments Policy Annex A - Livestock Guidance
- Insurance Register
- Lone Working Policy (updated). A short discussion took place about disclaimers related to risk assessing events where volunteers were involved. The Clerk agreed to consider this in the creation of a new Volunteering Policy.
- Acceptance of Office - Chairperson
- Green, Open Spaces & Trees Management Policy. This was subject to the addition of the Clifton Road land.

119.Events/Attendance at Meetings

Spring Litter Pick Event

The Clerk confirmed that the Great British Spring Clean would take place from 21st March to 6th April this year. A discussion was held about how to promote this and facilitate a community litter pick. It was suggested that the 'Sharlston Against Litter' Group could potentially become self-sustainable now after a number of years support by the Parish Council. With limited capacity, it was felt that the Parish Council needed to move away from 'owning' community events and start to facilitate these instead for the community to take a lead on. Cllr Nicholson made the point that the Group was still linked to the Parish Council on Facebook and felt that there was an expectation that the Council would still lead the event, provide picking kits etc. The District Councillors were permitted to give advice and explained how they now facilitated rather than led litter picks.

It was proposed and **RESOLVED** that Cllr Nicholson create a poll on the SAL Group to advertise the Great British Spring Clean and invite the community to come together to litter pick during this period. It was noted that the Parish Council could support with providing kit if required. It was further proposed and **RESOLVED** that the Group be renamed to remove the Parish Council name.

80th Anniversary of VE Day – 8th May 2025

Initial ideas included asking the Poppy Canopy Group to display the canopy again and possibly investigate the use of soldier covers for bollards. District Cllr Vickers highlighted that the anniversary of VJ Day and the end of WWII should also be included as these fell in August 2025. District Cllr Tennant-King also advised that any events should be notified to Cllr Josie Pritchard as she was collating the commemoration for Wakefield Council.

Parish Council's Open Day – 17th May 2025

It had already been agreed to use this as an opportunity for a public consultation on Parish Council projects. It was further proposed and **RESOLVED** to follow the same format as in 2024 with an additional exhibitor of the Yorkshire Air Ambulance which the Clerk agreed to contact.

Remembrance Day 2025

The Clerk reminded the meeting that it had been agreed to look at increasing the commemoration of Remembrance Day again in 2025. Previous ideas had included pavement poppies and poppies for lampposts / bollards.

Christmas 2025 – standing item

The Clerk suggested that an evaluation of 2024 arrangements should take place as early as possible to help inform the arrangements for this year. It was proposed and **RESOLVED** to start this in the Hub.

It was further proposed and **RESOLVED** that more time be dedicated to this agenda item at next month's meeting.

120. Planning Applications

One application was considered without comment.

121. Planning Decisions

One decision was considered without comment.

122. Correspondence

The Clerk had previously circulated a list of correspondence from December & January and she highlighted an additional three items received after circulation.

123. Summary of Projects for Publication

It was suggested that key updates continue to be shared via Facebook, Instagram and the website. The Clerk had noted the following for sharing; litter pick event, health walks and community calendar.

124. Future Agenda Items

The Clerk reminded everyone to forward any items to her by 23rd February.

125. Financial & Employment Matters

The Clerk shared the bank balances as at 31st January 2025.

The Clerk had previously shared the cashbook position and bank reconciliation for January 2025

The following accounts were then approved for payment.

Supplier	Details	Amount/Type
Sam Turner & Sons	cables for Xmas lights (emergency spend)	95.96 Card
Amazon	Printer paper	19.90 card
Susan Pollard	Expenses related to carol event	107.18 bank trans

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

Supplier	Details	Amount/Type
Hall & Rhodes	CCTV Service	118.80 bank trans
Dan Hodgson	Additional outside sockets for businesses	780.00 bank trans
Zurich	Parish Council Insurance 2025	1616.19 bank trans
Onscreen	Web support Q4	225.00 bank trans
Dan Verity	Installation & removal of small lit Christmas trees	550.00 bank trans
Woolley Edge Xmas Tree Farm	Long Row Tree	125.00 bank trans

Currys	Laptop care plan – 3rd installment	27.33 DD
Onscreen	email account 25-26 + domain renewal 24 – 30	360 bank trans
Thomas Evans	Singer at carol event	80 bank trans
Emma King	Salary	
Zoe Kozlowski	Salary	
Zoom	Monthly subscription	15.59 card
Three	Clerk's Mobile Phone	30.72 DD

The Clerk then gave a report back from the Finance Committee's meeting held on 27th January. She first gave a summary of the current and expected position for year end 2025 to demonstrate the remaining reserves to support the new budget. She then explained a spend analysis to demonstrate the highest spend areas of the current budget. Finally, she presented her proposed budget for 2025/26 which included key savings when compared to the current year and recommended a precept increase of £1500 from £37,000 to £38,500 to ensure the Parish Council was able to realise its planned projects in the new year. The Clerk expressed concern that a number of unplanned spends had left the Parish Council with lower reserves than anticipated and urged caution when managing the budget in 2025/26 and a real focus on increasing income through sponsorship opportunities, grant applications and a review of assets.

It was proposed and **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council accept the proposed budget and precept increase. As it was a tied vote with Cllrs Nicholson & Hampshire voting against the precept increase, the Chairperson exercised his casting vote to agree the budget and precept increase.

It was proposed and **RESOLVED** to defer all remaining items to the next agenda.

126.Date & Time of Next Meeting

It was proposed and **RESOLVED** that the next meeting take place on Monday, 3rd March 2025.

There being no other business the Chairperson thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 9.15 pm.

Paul Belbin

Chairperson

3rd February 2025