

Shotley Parish Council

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held on Thursday 15th November 2018 (7.15pm) at the Village Hall, The Street, Shotley.

Present: Cllrs B Powell (Chairman), R Wrinch (Vice-chairman), M Williams, G Richens, J Catling, N Green, R Green and Mrs D Bedwell (Parish Clerk).

County and District Councils: County Cllr D Woods and District Cllr D Davis. District Cllr P Patrick's apologies were noted.

Public gallery: Seven members of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Apologies had been received from Cllrs B Higgs and B Nichols.
2. **Declarations of interest with regard to items on the agenda and additions to register:** Cllr G Richens declared a Pecuniary Interest on item 13 and Cllr R Green declared a non-pecuniary interest on item 13 also.
3. **Reports**
 - a) County Councillor's report (D Woods)- Apologies received and report circulated.
 - b) District Councillor's report (P Patrick): Apologies had also been received.
 - c) District Councillor's report (D Davis): A brief report was received from Cllr D Davis, in which he congratulated the winners/finalists of the Stars of Babergh Awards and the organisers of the recent Remembrance Concert. Cllr D Davis also reported on the recent planning decision re the Gate Farm caravan park, the Shotley Pier and the Sudbury bypass.
4. **Public participation at meetings** (Meeting open to the public to allow members of the public to speak): A member of the public wished to echo Cllr Davis's positive comments about the recent Babergh Awards and Remembrance events.
5. **To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18th October 2018:** It was resolved to approve the minutes as a true record of the meeting held, with a minor amendment regarding the name of a local road.
6. **Planning Matters**
 - a) To consider applications received from Babergh District Council:
 - i) DC/18/04733 "Lindi", The Street- Erection of rear and side two storey extension, single storey rear extension and new entrance porch: It was resolved to recommend the approval of this planning application.
 - ii) DC/18/05002 - 1 And 3 Queensland and DC/18/05003 - 16 Queensland- Demolition of existing dwellings and erection of 5 no. new dwellings; Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 3 no. dwellings (Use Class C3) and associated works: It was resolved to recommend the approval of both planning applications with the following recommendations:
 - That Shotley and Erwarton residents were prioritised when it came to the allocation of the dwellings

- That the properties remained in the public sector and there was no future “right to buy”
 - That SCC Highways’ consultee recommendation regarding the access point (which was currently on the bend) according to the plans) has regard for pedestrian and driver safety
- b) To note Approvals/Refusals:
- i) **DC/18/00873 Land Adjacent to Frogs Alley**- Full Planning Application - Partial change of use to provide glamping and to facilitate event hosting: Planning Permission Granted.
- c) Planning correspondence
- i) **DC/18/01988 Red House Farm, Wades Lane**- Conversion of existing cart lodge into 1no. dwelling- Application withdrawn.
 - ii) **Queensland affordable housing scheme**- to receive initial comments from members with regards to proposals: This application had been discussed as a full application and its approval had been recommended.
 - iii) **Gate Farm Road Caravan Park**: The previous application under ref. DC/18/02852 for lawfulness of use had been refused by Babergh District Council. However, the Enforcement Section continued to look into the fact that although the site was supposed to operate on a seasonal basis, for the past three years a number of caravans had been lived on, on a permanent basis, as documented by a number of local residents. This was in breach of current permissions.

7. Highways matters: To receive updates and consider further actions; A number of Highways matters were discussed and considered by members, as follows:

- Cllr G Richens reported that the Parish Council’s request to the SOS group with regards to assistance with the maintenance of the footpath between Old Hall Road and East View was being considered by the group. There were some initial indications that it may prove to be “too big a job” and that contracted services may be the only way forward, particularly when taking into account all the SCC budget cuts and the fact that there may not even be a one yearly cut carried out by that local authority anymore.
- Members agreed that the footway between Shotley and Shotley Gate, which was also the only pedestrian safe way to school, should be seen as a priority and included in the Parish Council budget if the Local authority was no longer able to or willing to do it.
- It was noted that the Parish Council may have to adopt a pragmatic approach and decide where the existing limited financial resources should be deployed to, with this particular footpath being at the top of the list, which may mean that other not so “health and safety” related matters may remain unable to be financed.
- It was agreed that some quotes for this particular work should be requested in order to be considered within the budget in future financial years.
- Bristol Hill pedestrian improvements- there had been no further news to report.

- The recently received licence for the siting of a memorial bench on the verge near Orwell View (opposite the Village Hall) was being re-considered due to the occasional parking of cars on the spot originally agreed.

8. Play areas:

- a) To consider quotes received for various tree works (Queensland and Lloyd Road): Cllr B Powell had met with a tree surgeon on site, who had identified Ash Die Down on some of the trees in the Lloyd Road Open Space (near the tennis courts). Some tree works would still need to be carried out as the overgrown branches were the main cause of the mould build up on the courts surface. These overgrown branches had also been raised by neighbouring residents as a concern.

There was also a large amount of Ivy growing over some of the trees, therefore the quote would include its removal.

The consideration of quotes for tree surgery was again deferred to the next meeting.

- b) To note receipt of play areas annual inspections and agree any immediate works: The play area inspection reports had been received and contained a number of minor repairs /replacements needed.

With the recent formation of a Play Equipment Provision Working Group looking to engage in a project which would deliver new facilities to the village, members agreed with the Clerk's recommendation that spending on the existing play equipment should be kept to a minimum and work could be carried out by a local contractor, rather than be a costly exercise (providing the equipment remained health and safety compliant and was able to be used by the local children).

Clerk to engage the services of a local contractor to carry out any such needed repairs in due course.

- c) Lloyd Road tennis courts: To consider quote received for various maintenance items: Members approved the expenditure for the cleaning and treating of the tennis courts' surface and for the tightening of the fence but decided against the replacement of the two gates for the time being. Clerk to action. The replacement of the broken centre section and net had already been approved at the previous meeting.

Once the works to the nearby trees was carried out and the courts were exposed to more sunlight, it was hoped the issue with the formation of algae would be improved.

9. **Allotments:** To consider response received to bollard installation proposal and agree course of action, including expenditure: A small number of comments had been received from the public, some of which were in support of the installation of a bollard and others which were questioning what system would be in place to allow permitted users to get through. There had been no significant negative feedback, therefore members agreed that the bollard should be installed (the exact location of which would need to be agreed) and with a combination type lock (code to be provided to those same permitted users). Clerk to action purchase and installation of bollard once site visit had been carried out in order to agree exact location.

10. **To consider items of maintenance pertaining to the Heritage Park and approve any expenditure needed** (inc. swing tree, picnic table, edging, etc): It was agreed that a local contractor would be instructed to carry out the minor repairs to the picnic table, Heritage Park (Crows Nest) bench and edging. It was hoped most of the materials needed could be sourced locally but any

additional materials would be covered under the annual maintenance budget.

11. To consider purchase of replacement leaflet dispenser for the Shotley Explorer guide: It was resolved to approve the purchase of the leaflet dispensers, which Shotley Open Spaces would kindly install on behalf of the Council.

12. Finance and administration

- a) To consider and approve accounts for payment and note receipts/bank balances: It was resolved to approve the accounts for payment (as per list attached to these minutes) and receipts were noted. Bank balances were unavailable at this point due to Cllr B Nichols' absence.
- b) To approve meeting dates for 2019: It was resolved to approve the meeting dates for 2019.
- c) To note receipt of Internal and External Audit reports and any recommendations therein: Deferred to the next meeting.
- d) To approve first and second quarter accounts 2018/2019: Deferred to the next meeting.
- e) Initial budget and precept considerations for 2019/2020: Deferred to the next meeting. Members raised a number of items that would need to be considered in addition to regular costs, such as the footpath maintenance discussed under item 7.
- f) Clerk's report: Members received a brief report from the Clerk, including a reference to the sign outside the Bristol Hill conveniences, which indicated opening hours of 7.00am, when this was not the case in the Winter (as per cleaning contract).

It was agreed that, as this had only been raised by one member of the public, rather than increase contractual hours, for the time being the sign would be temporarily removed during the Winter months. Clerk to action.

13. Phase 3 /coastal erosion matters: To note formal registration of the Shotley Peninsula Shoreline Community Interest Company and consider application for funding: *Cllr G Richens left the room due to a Declaration of Pecuniary Interest.* The recent registration of the SPS CIC was noted. There was some debate with regards to the application for £10,000 funding towards some initial survey costs. The exact costs were yet to be established and a site visit by a qualified Engineer was in the process of being organised.

When asked whether applications for funding had been submitted to any other authorities, the answer was negative, for this particular expenditure, as just the Parish Council had been approached. Letters had been written to others but seeking support in due course for the capital costs instead, which were expected to be in the region of £1 Million. The group needed to ascertain and understand the full extent of the scope of the project before they were in a position to apply for other funding.

The Group understood that an amount of £10,000 had previously been budgeted by the Parish Council for Phase 3 and that this amount had reverted back to General Reserves at the end of that financial year. However, the Group did not believe it would be unreasonable for the Parish Council to commit to some substantial funding on this occasion.

Members agreed that although some of the work would be on Parish Council land, in realistic terms the Parish Council was being asked for a considerable commitment over a long period of time, which may prove to be unsustainable.

Members also added that they understood the main objective behind the Group's formation was to spearhead the project, by managing it and securing the necessary funding, so that the Parish Council, who was unable to lead or fund it, ceased from being asked to meet unrealistic expectations when it came to coastal erosion/sea defences.

As it stood, a £10,000 grant at this point would represent approximately 20% of the Council's annual precept, which was not manageable when taking into account all the other Council's financial commitments.

It was noted that Shotley Open Spaces currently held in trust £5,000 towards Phase 3 costs and questions were asked as to whether these funds had been reclaimed by SPS CIC from SOS. It appeared SOS had been contacted with regards to this matter but that a positive response had not been forthcoming. The Parish Council had also previously approached the SOS with regards to these funds only to be informed that SOS did not wish the Parish Council to get involved with this matter any further.

Further comments were made with regards to the existing gabion defences and how they would not last 25 years, as indicated in the original licence. Following a recent inspection, it was clear that some of the gabions needed some work already in order to extend their life.

Members were generally in agreement that the Parish Council should support the efforts of SPS CIC but that £10,000 may be too much at this point. Representatives of PS CIC found this disappointing, as they believed they would only be taken seriously by future sponsors if the Parish Council was seen to be actively supporting the project, not just initially but long term, as this was a two generational solution (100 years) and not a temporary "fix".

It was noted that the Clerk had made some tentative enquiries with other statutory bodies in order to secure some funding towards the survey costs and was waiting to hear back from them soon.

A suggestion was made to consider the funding application further at the Finance Working Group meeting, once the Council's budgetary position was understood, in order for a realistic recommendation to be put forward at the next Parish Council meeting. This should also allow sufficient time for the Engineer's site visit, which would in turn provide a realistic quote with regards to the survey costs.

It was, therefore, agreed that this matter would be deferred to the next meeting for the time being.

Cllr G Richens returned to the meeting.

14. **To agree the Parish Council's response to the "England Coastal Path -Stour Estuary- Indicative proposals for coastal access restrictions":** Members discussed the various points which they felt were relevant with regards to the proposals and a list of comments to be submitted was agreed.
15. **To note any further correspondence received and agree any response needed:** Most of the correspondence received had been circulated and considered by members.

On the matter of draft BMSDC Homes Strategy 2019-2024 and the draft BMSDC Homelessness Reduction Strategy 2019-2024, whilst members agreed that the consultation documents were very well written, there was a concern that unless there were sufficient resources, it would be difficult to implement it.

There was already a charitable organisation on the Peninsula in the form of “Tiffers-The Bus Shelter”, which did not appear to be mentioned in the document, who had found it impossible so far to find a suitable, long-term location from which to operate.

Having to use a roadside layby in order to provide support to the growing number of homeless people in our area was challenging to say the least and it was disappointing that when you considered all the local authorities and land owners, it continued to prove an impossible task to find the bus shelter a permanent home.

There was also insufficient provision for single individuals, with considerable penalties being imposed on those with a spare bedroom, which made it extremely difficult for someone on a low or no guaranteed income to sustain their rent payments.

A suggestion was also made that flexibility with existing resources may facilitate a fairer sharing of existing dwellings, ie an elderly person living in a three-bedroom house on their own would probably be best placed in a single room dwelling, thus releasing the larger property to a larger family.

It was noted that although the Parish Council was being asked for their views as a statutory body, all councillors and residents would also be able to participate in the consultation and put forward their views.

- 16. Reports from Councillors on matters not itemised on agenda/to be included in next Agenda** (no decisions with a financial implication are permitted to be made at this point and should be added to a future agenda for consideration): No reports were received from councillors, it was noted that the SPC CIC funding consideration would be added to the next agenda.

- 17. Date of next meeting:** 13 December 2018- Noted.

With no further matters to be transacted, the meeting ended at 9.20pm and was followed by the verification of the accounts for payment.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____