

Minutes of the Shotley Parish Council Virtual Meeting held on Thursday 25th June 2020 (7.30pm)

Present: Cllrs B Powell (Chairman), R Green, J Briscoe, T Ingram, C Mills, D Davis, M Williams and Mrs D Bedwell (Parish Clerk).

County and District Councils: District Cllr D Davis.

Public gallery: One member of the public.

Public participation at meetings: There were no comments from the public gallery.

SPC/20/51: To receive and consider any apologies for absence: Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr R Wrinch (due to broadband connectivity issues). These were approved by Council. County Cllr D Woods had attempted to connect to the meeting but had not been successful.

SPC/20/52: To receive declarations of interest with regards to items on the agenda: None received.

SPC/20/53: To note County and District Councillors' reports: County Cllr D Woods report had been circulated to members ahead of the meeting and was noted. Cllr D Davis would forward his report to members in due course.

SPC/20/54: To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 14 May 2020: It was resolved to approve the minutes as a true record of the meeting held.

SPC/20/55: Finance and Administration

- a) To approve the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group Terms of Reference: A brief discussion took place over items which had been suggested for amendment, such as: The total number of Councillors permitted to join the group; The qualifying factors, ie to live within the Neighbourhood Plan designated area; The removal of the term "Steering", and removal of any other items which may cause ambiguity. Working Group to agree amendments and circulate to full Council for approval at the next meeting.
- b) To approve the appointment of the Responsible Financial Officer and the Internal Auditor: It was resolved to approve the continued appointment of Mrs D Bedwell as the Responsible Financial Officer and of the Suffolk Association Of Local Councils Audit Services for the Internal Audit.
- c) To consider and approve the accounts for payment and note receipts/bank balances: It was resolved to approve the accounts for payments as per schedule circulated ahead of the meeting.
- d) To consider and approve the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of the AGAR) for Year ended 31 March 2020: It was resolved to approve the Annual Governance Statement.
- e) To consider and approve the Annual Accounts for year ended 31 March 2020: It was resolved to approve the accounts for year ended 31 March 2020.
- f) To consider and approve the Asset Register for the year ended 31 March 2020: It was resolved to approve the asset register for 2020.

- g) To consider and approve the Accounting Statements (Section 2 of the AGAR) for year ended 31 March 2020: It was resolved to approve the Accounting Statements for year ended 31 March 2020.

SPC/20/56: To receive update on ongoing matters and agree any further actions:

- a) Coastal foraging – Shotley Gate foreshore: A detailed report was received from Cllr D Davis. The Fisheries Protection Officer, Babergh District Council, Environmental Health and Suffolk Police continued to monitor the situation.

There were a number of complexities which meant that a resolution may not be straight forward but intelligence continued to be gathered, which may eventually result in prosecution.

It may also be possible to bring into place an emergency by-law but this was also ongoing. It was hoped that recent publicity may act as a deterrent.

The possible risks posed to members of the public venturing out onto the mud and water without due care were highlighted. The Parish Council had, in the past, discussed the possibility of placing a life belt near the area. Cllr D Davis, who had been tasked with making enquiries with the Marina, provided an update. The Marina management was in the process of reassessing their position with regards to this matter following the building of the new flats by the shore.

Cllr R Green, the Chairman and the Clerk had attended during one of the days when high numbers of foragers had been reported and had spoken with representatives of all the groups which were amassing large quantities of shellfish. They had all been informed that although foraging on a non-commercial level was permitted, this was not the case on the foreshore from the pill-box onwards, as the land beyond that point was owned by the Parish Council, followed by an RSPB reserve. It appeared that thus far not many of the foragers had gone beyond that point.

It was also noted that recent activity had impacted on the public conveniences on Bristol Hill. The conveniences were often being left very dirty, with sand and other debris, which was impacting the contractor's cleaning schedule.

Other issues that were raised on this matter included the risk of poisoning due to shellfish not being prepared and/or stored correctly and increased parking problem on Bristol Hill. The parking issues were also likely to increase once the refurbishment of Shotley Pier was completed and it re-opened to the public.

Signage had also been discussed and approved electronically by Councillors but some members did not support the idea of additional signage in an area where this was already somewhat excessive.

The matter of coastal foraging was in hand, by the various relevant authorities, and the Parish Council, as well as members of the public, would leave it to those authorities to investigate and take any action deemed necessary.

- b) Rose Farm Cottages footpath: Following correspondence and site visit from the SCC Rights of Way Officer, signage and obstructions had been removed and no further reports had been received. This matter was now closed.

SPC/20/57: To consider correspondence received which requires a response/action:

- a) NALC new model code of conduct consultation- agree corporate response: Councillors to be reminded of deadline and comments to be sent electronically.
- b) Enquiry pertaining to private boundary wall and potential impact on PC owned post box: This matter was briefly discussed. A post box, acquired by public subscription by the Parish Council many years ago, was inset in a wall of a private residence. The wall appeared to be showing some signs of damage and could fall into disrepair or collapse altogether. As it was a retaining wall, there was concern that it could affect not only neighbouring properties but also the post box itself.

This post box dated from the 1800's and had historic and heritage value for the village, therefore the Parish Council should seek to protect it by encouraging the repair of the wall, or alternatively by re-siting it somewhere else. It was agreed that two named Councillors would make contact with the property owner in order to initiate dialogue and seek views with regards to this matter.

SPC/20/58: Clerk update, including actions completed under scheme of delegation: A detailed report and log had been circulated to members by the Clerk ahead of the meeting and was discussed.

The Clerk was thanked by members for the work carried out in terms of Covid-19 community support, in particular the Shotley Food Parcel Scheme. Members also agreed with the Clerk when she referred to the different struggles and difficulties some parishioners may face, once lockdown restrictions were lifted, but personal circumstances changed due to redundancies and financial changes. It was important that the spirit of community help and support continued beyond the pandemic.

SPC/20/59: Reports from Parish Councillors: *Cllr C Mills left the meeting at 8.56pm due to another engagement.* Issues raised by members, and for the Clerk to action as necessary, included: The parking of vehicles and resulting damage to the newly resurfaced footpath and verge between the Shotley Rose Pub and the Post office; Overgrown hedge on Gayford Terrace which was causing pedestrians to walk on the roadside; Report of multiple trees dying at the Community Orchard and foul play being suspected; Volunteers unable to carry out some regular maintenance on the Heritage Park and contractor to be instructed to complete works for the time being.

A matter was raised between two councillors but as the subject matter was not Parish Council related, details will not feature in these minutes.

Cllr D Davis thanked the Clerk on behalf of a local resident, who had been immensely pleased with the speed in which the Clerk had dealt with a matter pertaining to the outdoor facilities in Lloyd Road.

SPC/20/60: Date of next meeting: 16th July 2020

SPC/20/61: Temporary exclusion of press and public: *That pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission at meetings) Act 1960 the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed:* No remaining members of the public in attendance.

SPC/20/62: Employment matters: The Clerk presented a report and recommendations with regards to one of the Council's employment positions and these were approved in full. Clerk to action.

With no further matters to be transacted, the meeting ended at 9.10pm

Signed: _____ Date: _____