

Shapwick Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting held on 11 July 2023
at 7.30pm at the Pavilion, Shapwick

- 23/24/17 Present:** Frank Barnard, Graham Croucher, Lesley Gaskell, Nikki Polden and Paul Rogers
- 23/24/18 In Attendance:** Sue Williams (Clerk)
- 23/24/19 Also Present:** County Councillor Matt Martin
- 23/24/20 Apologies for Absence**
Apologies were received from Steve Campion and Moray McGowan
- 23/24/21 Declarations of Interest**
There were no declarations of interest.
- Villagers' Open Period**
- 23/24/22 Acquisition of Land behind the Village Hall**
The Chair thanked Councillors for their input in getting the project to this final stage. Particular thanks to Lesley Gaskell for her work on the legal documentation. Limited explanation on the legal documents had been received from the property lawyer so a summary has been prepared by Lesley Gaskell (a brief report on the legal paperwork – not any legal advice).
- Legal paperwork received by the Parish Council comprises:
- Contract of Sale of Freehold Land
 - Transfer of Title
 - Overage Deed
- The documents are in an agreed state and set out formalities. The final fee statement from the lawyer of £892.85 represents good value for money.
- There were no further questions on the legal documentation.
- Paul Rogers drew attention to the time limit on promised grant funding for the purchase of the land. Lesley Gaskell suggested that once the paperwork has been signed that Bill Robbins is contacted and made aware of the time limit.
- 7.40pm Councillor Matt Martin arrived.
- The Chair said clarification on the terms of the promised grant funding should be obtained. Nikki Polden said she thought that as long as the project is started then the terms will be fulfilled. Lesley Gaskell said the project should be viewed as the acquisition of the land plus working towards the provision of a play area, allotments and open space seating etc.
- It was recognised that other sources of funding are not accessible until the land asset is in the ownership of the Parish Council.

23/24/22 cont'd

a) Approval of Purchase based on the Terms of Legal Documents received

Lesley Gaskell proposed that the Parish Council approve the purchase of the land behind the village hall - land comprising approximately 1.9 acres registered under Titles Numbers ST285230 and ST285219 at a price of £35,000.00. The land being sold with vacant possession. Seconded by Nikki Polden. Unanimous.

b) Authorisation of Chair and Vice-Chair to sign Legal Documents on behalf of Parish Council

Paul Rogers proposed that Councillors authorise the Chair and Vice-Chair to sign the legal documents received. Seconded by Frank Barnard. Unanimous.

c) Authorisation of Payment of Lawyer's Fees as per Account

Carol Tucker, Property Lawyer for the Parish Council, has submitted her completion statement of £892.85 (includes vat of £104.00). Nikki Polden proposed that the Parish Council agree and settle the fees as per statement received. Seconded by Paul Rogers. Unanimous.

d) Authorisation of Transfer of Purchase Monies when requested

Graham Croucher proposed that the Parish Council approve, when requested by the property lawyer, the transfer of £35,000.00 being the purchase price of the land comprising approximately 1.9 acres registered under Titles Numbers ST285230 and ST285219. Seconded by Frank Barnard. Unanimous.

Chair and Vice-Chair signed the legal documents. Clerk to submit to property lawyer.

With the completion of the legal documents Councillors agreed that a letter be written to the grant provider to request draw down of the funds.

Nikki Polden asked, with the legal documents signed, what the timeframe until completion would be. Lesley Gaskell said she had asked the property lawyer about the transfer of title as this will be what is holding up the process – awaiting a reply.

23/24/23

Planning Updates

Graham Croucher reported that Jason Goddard (Dovecote School) has advised that an application for the car park and café has been submitted but no response from the planning department to date. An application for the pods is still to be submitted. Frank Barnard noted that the pod in front of the dovecote is still in place and it would be nice if consideration was given to moving this pod. Lesley Gaskell said once the pod application is available the Parish Council will have an opportunity to comment.

The Clerk reported that a resident of Orchard Way has raised concerns about the installation of two structures, a sheep shed and chicken coup, in close proximity to their boundary. Lesley Gaskell suggested writing to Jason Goddard to inform him of the concerns raised. Clerk to action. Lesley Gaskell advised Councillors that her DBS check has been completed and she has received an invitation to Advisory Board meetings for Dovecote School for the Autumn term – it is hoped that attendance at these meetings will provide a platform to feedback from the village.

The recent outstanding Ofsted grading awarded to the school was noted.

23/24/24

County Councillor Report

Councillor Matt Martin drew attention to the forthcoming Avalon and Poldens Local Community Networks (LCN) Launch Meeting to which Parish Councils are invited. Councillor Matt Martin said he would be putting himself forward for the position of chair of the LCN.

23/24/24 cont'd

The Chair asked what matters the Parish Council should be taking to the meeting on behalf of the community. Councillor Matt Martin suggested focusing on the smaller more achievable projects and thinking about how town and rural communities can achieve the best outcomes for each type of community.

Councillor Matt Martin drew attention to an email communication to Parish Council's regarding 20mph zone consultation – Clerk to distribute.

After discussion, the Chair and Vice-Chair will take the following areas to the meeting:

- 20 mph zones in villages
- Better broadband for rural communities
- Local bus services
- Fly-tipping issues faced by rural communities

The Chair asked Councillor Matt Martin for an update on the monies promised to the village CLT group. Councillor Matt Martin said there had been an email discussion without a resolution and he will follow it up again.

23/24/25 Highways

The following matters have been reported:

Fly-Tipping – Plasterboard dumped in the ditch in Lippets Way close to the Limekiln junction

Trees – Butcher's Lane: Lower limbs on oak tree causing visibility issues when turning out onto Main Road. Orchard Way: Branches of tree on verge overhanging whole road – hazardous to high sided vehicles – Highways has identified this as being on land owned by cricket club – issue has been referred to the cricket club.

Bus Shelter Wall – Resident has raised concerns about facing stones coming away. Agreed Parish Council will assist resident in returning the surrounding wall to breeze blocks.

23/24/26 Website

Working party had met to discuss what the requirements of a new community website – one where both Parish Council and village groups are represented – would be. The next steps would be to progress to obtaining quotes. Lesley Gaskell suggested that this should be put on hold until the village green purchase is complete and available funds are known. The Chair said that planning should start now for a launch next year. Paul Rogers suggested that village groups, to be represented on the website, could be asked for a contribution to the costs. The Chair said he would co-ordinate a meeting with Steve McAuliffe for advice on next steps.

23/24/27 Minutes of the Meetings held on 23 May 2023

The minutes were agreed and duly signed. Proposed by Lesley Gaskell. Seconded by Graham Croucher.

23/24/28 Finance

a) Cheques for Signature HMRC £216.60 (Chq 986, PAYE Mths 1-4), Somerset Council £83.62 (Chq 987, Emptying of Dog Waste Bin), Mrs SE Williams (Chq 988, Salary & Expenses) and Somerset Council £892.85 (Chq 989, Property Lawyer Final Statement)

b) Online Banking Application has been made. Lesley Gaskell to follow up progress.

23/24/29

Village Green Project

Councillors reviewed action list prepared by the Chair.
Grass-cutting: Clean Surrounds has indicated they are not able to take on any more contracts at the moment. Agreed to explore other options including investigating the purchase of a second hand mower and using volunteers.

8.55pm Councillor Matt Martin left the meeting.

Clerk asked to review insurance in relation to owning the land as an asset.

Lesley Gaskell agreed to get advice on repair work required on boundary walls and concrete hardstanding area.

Quotes to be obtained for tables and benches.

Paul Rogers and Nikki Polden to follow up on potential match funding for installation of play equipment.

Master plan of village green to be created and for sharing with Somerset Council for advice.

23/24/30

Date of Next Meeting

Date of next PC meeting will be Tuesday 19th September 2023 7.30pm Village Hall.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

