

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SHAVINGTON-CUM-GRESTY PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 2 SEPTEMBER 2020**

**THE MEETING WAS HELD REMOTELY IN ACCORDANCE WITH REGULATIONS
UNDER S.78 OF THE CORONAVIRUS ACT 2020**

PRESENT:	Councillor B Gibbs	Chairman
	Councillor V Adams	Councillor M Ferguson
	Councillor L Buchanan	Councillor R Hancock
	Councillor K Gibbs	Councillor R Moore
	Councillor J Hassall	
IN ATTENDANCE:	Borough Councillor David Marren	
	Mr Tim Dobson	Community Manager
	Mr W Atteridge	Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
	Sgt M Caldwell	Cheshire Police
	PCSO Nigel Hobbs	Cheshire Police
APOLOGIES:	Councillors N Cooper and G McIntyre	

**269 S.85 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972
(DISQUALIFICATION THROUGH NON-ATTENDANCE)**

Members were reminded that although the Coronavirus Act 2020 introduced new regulations governing town and parish council meetings, the 'six month rule' still applied.

Under S.85 of the Local Government Act 1972, a Councillor who had failed to attend consecutive meetings for a period of six months, without having first submitted his/her reasons for absence to the Parish Council, and those reasons had been accepted, the councillor was automatically disqualified.

Although apologies were usually tendered at each meeting, they were received without comment. It was prolonged absence which required specific consideration by the Parish Council prior to the expiry of the six-month period. A councillor who was aware that they would not be able to attend a meeting for six months, must, by the fifth month, have submitted his/her reasons for the prolonged absence so that this could be considered and approved by the Parish Council at that fifth meeting.

Attendance as a member at a meeting of any Committee or Sub-Committee of the authority, or at a meeting of any joint Committee, joint Board or other body, by which the functions of the authority were being discharged, was deemed to be attendance at a meeting of the authority.

270 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members were invited to declare any (a) disclosable pecuniary interest; (b) personal interest; or (c) prejudicial interest which they had in any item of business on the agenda, the nature of that interest, and in respect of disclosable interests and prejudicial interests, to leave the meeting prior to the discussion of that item.

No declarations were made.

271 MINUTES (PARISH COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS)

271.1 Parish Council Meetings 15 and 23 July 2020

The Minutes of the meetings held on 15 and 23 July 2020 were not yet available; however, Members noted the following which included action taken by the Clerk after the meetings.

- The Community Manager Appointments Panel now excluded Councillor Ryan owing to his friendship with one of the candidates.

- Brave Little Tank had been notified that the Social Media Retainer would continue until 30 days after a Community Manager had been appointed.
- Remembrance Sunday. Amberon had been booked for the road closures. Cancellation could be made up to 24 hours prior to the event without charge. (Cost: £754.63 including VAT.)
- Further copy of Website Accessibility Guidance sent to Brave Little Tank.
- No further up-date on the Water Plus situation at the Village Hall.
- Land Availability Assessment: The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had been asked to convene a meeting to consider the Meller Speakman report. Subsequent to that, Kate McLean of Meller Speakman had emailed and suggested that she should be included in the next meeting of the Steering Group to offer advice and that this meeting should also include a Cheshire East Council Officer. She had quoted £1,000 for Stage 2 of the process. The Council was not, at this stage, being asked to consider this quotation.
- The Notice of Public Rights to Inspect the Accounts for 2019-2020 was uploaded onto the website on 7 August 2020. Registered electors were entitled to inspect the accounts between 10 August and 21 September 2020. The Clerk had taken a screenshot of the website to serve as evidence for the audit of the 2020-2021 accounts.

271.2 Matters Arising from the Meetings held on 15 and 23 July 2020

(A) Village Hall – Installation of Smart Meter

British Gas (BG) had now contacted the Clerk to explain that the reason for the high charges at the hall was because it was based on estimated readings. BG had suggested that if a smart meter were to be installed, this would send the readings direct to British Gas and would reflect actual usage.

The current situation (at 21 August 2020) was that the account showed a credit of £85.22.

RESOLVED: (a) That the Clerk seek quotations from alternative gas providers; and

(b) That in the event of other providers not being as competitive as British Gas, arrangements be made for a smart meter to be installed at the Village Hall.

Each Member present was individually polled for their vote and the motion was carried.

271.3 Committee Meetings

The Village Hall Committee met on 6 August 2020 and the Community Engagement Committee met on 11 August 2020. The minutes of these two Committee meetings were not yet available. The following were reported.

- **Village Hall Committee – 6 August 2020**

Rhino Safety had conducted a Covid-19 compliant risk assessment of the Village Hall on Tuesday, 18 August 2020. The quote was £119.00 plus VAT and the Clerk had agreed this with Councillor Vivien Adams as the Chairman of the Committee.

The risk assessment was included on the agenda at Minute No. 285.

- **Community Engagement Committee – 11 August 2020**

Another meeting had been scheduled for 15 September 2020 to give detailed consideration to Remembrance Sunday arrangements.

272 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Members of the public were able to ask questions under the Parish Council's Standing Orders.

There were no questions from members of the public.

(Note: Councillor Hancock arrived at this point in the proceedings.)

273 POLICE MATTERS – BEAT MANAGER'S REPORT

Members received a copy of the Beat Manager's Report and a traffic report, both of which had been forwarded to Members on 3 August 2020.

274 BOROUGH COUNCILLOR DAVID MARREN

Councillor David Marren's report had been distributed to Members prior to the meeting.

Councillor Marren drew attention to a number of items, in particular, the street naming on the Cherry Tree Park development.

The list of those killed in WWI had been provided to Cheshire East Council in 2018 with a request that they be used for all future naming of streets on new developments in the parish.

The Cherry Tree Park development now included a road called *Thomas Palin Close*; however, the name on the list provided to Cheshire East Council (CEC) was *George Thomas Palin*. Councillor Marren had asked CEC for an explanation as to why the road could not be re-named with his full name, or the alternatives of *George Palin Close*, or *George T Palin Close*.

A response was awaited but Councillor Marren did not expect that it would be possible to change the road name as all the houses on the development had now been sold and the name 'Thomas Palin Close' was on the deeds to the houses on that road.

275 POLICE MATTER

Sgt. Martin Caldwell was in attendance for this item and reported on the traffic problems on Gresty Lane. Through traffic was a problem as it was a narrow country lane and not intended for the current volume of traffic.

Arising out of discussion, Borough Councillor Marren agreed to meet on site with Sgt. Caldwell to review the situation.

276 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Regulation 16 process had recommenced. This was the publication period arranged by Cheshire East Council and concluded on 8 September 2020.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group met on 18 August 2020 and advised the Parish Council to submit the following to Cheshire East Council.

"A Land Availability Assessment is being prepared to consider the possibility of the Parish Council procuring an area of land to provide public open space for the community. The process is in its early stages, but the Council would be grateful if the following changes could be made to Policy COM3 to strengthen the policy in light of the likelihood of a new public open space being made available at some stage in the future.

POLICY COM3 – THE PROVISION OF NEW OPEN SPACE FACILITIES

The provision of additional public open spaces in Shavington-cum-Gresty to correct the existing shortfall will be strongly supported.

Major housing development proposals must include an area of publicly accessible open space, where possible in excess of Cheshire East Local Plan policy requirements for the provision of open space. These open spaces must be accessible and well connected to the community core by non-vehicular modes. Major housing development proposals should be accompanied by a feasibility study identifying where the open space is to be located and how it is to be delivered.

Should further housing developments take place which lead to the requirement for developer contributions which are to be provided off-site, these should be used in the village for the provision of additional open spaces, a multi-use game area and play facilities.

Add the following to the end of para 10.11 –

A land availability assessment to consider areas which may be suitable for a new area of public open space is currently being prepared (2020) and it is hoped that at some stage in the future, the Parish Council may be able to procure and deliver a new site for this purpose.”

RESOLVED: That the statement, as indicated above, be forwarded to Cheshire East Council for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Each Member present was individually polled for their vote and the motion was carried.

(Note: Sgt. Caldwell and Mr Atteridge withdrew from the meeting at this point in the proceedings.)

278 FINANCIAL MATTERS

278.1 Receipts and Payments Statement – 1 April – 30 June 2020

The Parish Council received a receipts and payments statement for the first quarter of the financial year. Statements for each of the Parish Council accounts were submitted.

To enable Members to be satisfied that the bank reconciliation was accurate, a copy of each of the bank statements was submitted for Members only. The Parish Council main account statement was to 30 June 2020; the Village Hall account was to 28 May 2020.

278.2 Budget Monitoring Statement -1 April – 30 June 2020

The Parish Council received a budget monitoring statement for the first quarter of the year, showing the approved budget for each head of expenditure, spend to 30 June 2020 and revised estimates to 31 March 2021.

278.3 Payments made since the last meeting

A list of payments made since the last meeting was noted. These excluded the direct debits which would be noted on the next receipts and payments statement to the Parish Council. These had been notified to three signatories in advance of payment being made.

Payee	Amount £ (gross)	Inv. No.	Date Paid	Service provided
ACE Playgrounds	4,395.05	0191	28 July	Repair and replacement of play equipment at Vine Tree Play Area
Beardmore Accountants	30.00	1903	21 Aug	Payroll service
Cheshire Constabulary	8,320.00	110720002086	21 Aug	Cost of PCSO April – June

Payee	Amount £ (gross)	Inv. No.	Date Paid	Service provided
Crystal Clean	144.00	SI-1428	2 Aug	Village Hall cleaning
Crystal Clean	180.00	SI-1461	20 Aug	Village Hall cleaning.
HMRC	337.32	N/A	20 Aug	Tax/NI on Clerk's salary
Northwich TC	1,588.20	4440	20 Aug	Grounds maintenance
Rhino Safety	142.80	4994	20 Aug	Covid-19 risk assessment
Solopress	32.44	2445108	20 Aug	Printing of notices for Vine Tree Play Area. An invoice for the second sign was awaited.

278.4 Authorisation of Payments

The Parish Council was asked to approve the following payment:

- ASH Waste Services – Village Hall Waste Collection - **£162.93** (A detailed explanation of the payment history for this account was provided.)

RESOLVED: That the payment to ASH Waste Services in the sum of £162.93 be approved.

Each Member present was individually polled for their vote and the motion was carried.

278.5 Amendment to Bank Mandate (C M Jones)

The bank had not yet set up the change in bank mandate to increase the Clerk's monthly net salary from 1 April 2020. A letter dated 4 March 2020 was signed by three cheque signatories and posted on 7 March 2020 but was not received by the bank.

The Clerk had prepared a further letter which had now been posted to the first cheque signatory, together with a stamped address envelope, with a request that two other signatures be added to the letter before it was posted to the bank.

278.6 Update on Audit Issues

As agreed at the meeting held on 23 July 2020, the Parish Council would review progress monthly to deal with the outstanding audit issues. The following were the specific audit issues raised by the Internal Auditor:

- (a) *The budgeting process which underpins the setting of the precept must be improved to take account of all known expenditure.*

The Clerk's opinion was that the process was not flawed; what occurred in 2019-2020 was that the Clerk, in error, did not include the cost of the remaining two quarters of the PCSO charges in the revised estimates to 31 March 2019. This would have impacted the budget for 2019-2020. This was an error only; not a flaw in the process and was rectified by holding an extra-ordinary meeting on 14 January 2019 to ensure that the correct budget was approved.

- (b) *The Council must ensure that it makes proper provision for the exercise of public rights for each financial year.*

The requirement of the regulations was that the public inspection period was not permitted to commence until after the Parish Council had approved the accounts.

The accounts for 2018-19 were not approved until 10 July 2019, but the exercise of the public rights period commenced on 1 July 2019.

2019-2020

The accounts for 2019-2020 were approved on 23 July 2020 and the public rights period commenced on 10 August 2020, concluding on 21 September 2020. A notice had been added to the website and the Clerk had retained a screenshot as evidence for next year's audit.

- (c) *Recurring recommendation: The Council to ensure that Members are not given authority to take action on behalf of the Council. This is contrary to S.101 of the Local Government Act 1972 which states that –*

'a local council may arrange for the discharge of any of its functions to –

*A committee (or sub-committee); or
An employee; or
Another local authority*

This was also referenced in Standing Orders – point 19, page 6.

The Clerk was reviewing the Minutes to establish where Members may have taken action on behalf of the Council during 2019-2020.

- (d) *Income systems for the Village Hall could not be tested. The Council needs to urgently re-establish effective internal controls over hall hire to ensure all hall hire documentation is retained and made available for internal audit.*

This was considered by the Village Hall Committee at its meeting on 6 August 2020 and agreement reached on the process.

- (e) *The fixed asset register should equate to last year's figure from the AGAR, plus the one addition in the year. The register therefore needs to be amended.*

The Practitioners' Guide requires that assets should be valued at purchase cost or an insurance proxy if the purchase cost is not known (that doesn't change over time;) therefore, the only movement in fixed assets each year should be for additions and disposals and all additions should be at purchase price. The Council needs to review the asset register and disclose the correct value in the AGAR which should equate to the value for fixed assets disclosed in the 2018/19 AGAR.

The Clerk carried out an investigation into the assets dating back to when she took over as Clerk in 2015. As a result of the investigation, the figure was revised and the list submitted to the Council on 23 July 2020. At that meeting, Members did not accept the revised list, but the figure remained in the AGAR, with the Clerk sending an explanatory note to the External Auditor.

The Council was asked to set up a Task Group to identify all the fixed assets currently held by the Parish Council. Once a Task Group was established and able to identify the full range of assets, the Council could then consider if each required a professional re-valuation, which was now suggested by Members.

The setting up of a Task Group would be dealt with at the meeting to be held on 7 October 2020.

The Clerk's report on valuing fixed assets was received and noted.

(f) VAT Issue – Raised in 2018-2019

The VAT incurred during 2018/2019 has not been reclaimed and is a recurring issue. This is a material issue and relates to the extensive VAT (in excess of the threshold of £7,500) on the Village Hall refurbishment work.

The Internal Auditor recommended consulting a VAT specialist. The Clerk had contacted Afford Bond, a Nantwich accountants. One of its staff was a VAT specialist who would be able to explore the possibility of advising if the Parish Council could apply to HMRC under the 'occasional breach' rule. The cost would be £850.00 plus VAT and the Clerk would be required to supply the following information:

- The last 4 years' VAT records.
- Anticipated spending and VAT forecast for the next 2 years.
- Details and summary of non-business use over the periods. Ideally, they would need to understand the extent of non-business use based on time used and if any areas were excluded from use during the periods.

RESOLVED: That the quotation from Afford Bond Chartered Accountants, in the sum of £850.00 net, be accepted, to offer advice in respect of the VAT 'occasional breach' rule.

(g) *VAT not reclaimed on payments made via direct debit had not been claimed.*

The Clerk had already indicated to the Internal Auditor that this would be the subject of a separate claim to be made after the financial year end.

The Clerk had now submitted this claim to HMRC.

(h) Issues raised in 2018/2019 which need resolution:

- *Budgetary control. The Council should review its budget analysis and ensure that it can balance the budget for 2019/2020. The Internal Auditor commented that the sum of £10,000 unallocated reserves and the £20,000 for the purchase of a parcel of land may be needed to ensure general cash reserves are in place at the end of the year.*

The Council did address this in 2019-20 by increasing reserves to £25,000 which was 14% of its budget, an increase of 9% over the previous year. This would need to be increased to 25% for 2021-2022.

- *The Internal Auditor has stated that delegation to a Councillor under Minute No. 289 (March 2019) is still outstanding.*

This was addressed and the delegation was rescinded on 10 July 2019 with authority being returned to the Clerk; however, the Auditor had also commented (as noted above) that the minutes indicate that councillors continue to commit the Council to expenditure in respect of the Village Hall.

- *Village Hall Income: There is still a shortfall of £315.00 in Village Hall receipts.*

The Clerk would submit the schedule of deposits made in 2018-19 to the Finance Committee on 28 October 2020.

- *Re-valuation of the Village Hall.*

To be dealt with as part of the review of Fixed Assets.

- *S.137 Payments. Omitted from the ledger as a separate identification in 2018-2019.*

There had been no S.137 payments in 2019-2020. There had been one S.137 payment in 2020-2021 and that had been recorded separately.

Members were informed that the reason for requiring the separate recording of these payments was the implications for the precept. S.137 payments were index-linked per head of the 'relevant population' which was the registered electors for the parish. The value in 2019-2020 was £8.12. It was important, therefore, that the Council must not exceed £8.12 x the number of registered electors in the parish.

278.7 Budget 2021-2022

(A) Contribution to cost of PCSOs

The Parish Council was invited to consider if the cost of two PCSOs should be factored into the draft budget for 2021-2022. This had been mooted when the budget for 2020-2021 was approved and it was agreed that this be considered for the next budget.

The timing was such that if a consultation was to be carried out with residents, this would need to be prepared and issued in time to inform the Parish Council at its December 2020 meeting.

RESOLVED: (a) That for the year 2021-2022, the policing costs be limited to one PCSO only; and

(b) That the Parish Council monitor the situation during the year, with a view to increasing the funding in the financial year 2022-2023.

Each Member present was individually polled for their vote and the motion was carried.

(B) Committee Recommendations

The Village Hall Committee and the Community Engagement Committee had both been asked to make budget suggestions for consideration by the Finance Committee at its meeting on 28 October 2020.

Each Committee had been unable to consider this in the absence of information on spend to date.

278.8 Appointment of Internal Auditor for the Accounts 2020-2021

The Parish Council was invited to appoint JDH Business Services Ltd. as the Internal Auditor for auditing the 2020-2021 accounts.

RESOLVED: That JDH Business Services Ltd be appointed as the Parish Council's auditor for the 2020-21 accounts.

Each Member present was individually polled for their vote and the motion was carried.

278.9 Litter-bins – Vine Tree Play Area

The Parish Council was asked to consider purchasing two covered litter bins for Vine Tree Play Area. A sum of £900 had been allocated for these in the budget for 2020-21.

RESOLVED: That two covered litter-bins be ordered for installation at Vine Tree Play Area.

Each Member present was individually polled for their vote and the motion was carried.

279 PLANNING

The Parish Council was asked to comment on the following planning applications.

- 20/3360N 16 Knights Way, CW2 5HU
Rear ground floor extension
- 20/3779N 10 Mercian Close, Shavington, CW2 5ES
Timber garage in rear garden
- 20/3231N 5 Mercian Cloe, CW2 5ES
Building of flat-roofed garage of breeze block construction with
rendered finish attached to the side of the house which includes digging
of footings and installing of a concrete floor slab.

At this point in the proceedings, Councillor Adams declared a personal interest in planning applications Nos. 20/3779N and 20/3231N on the basis that the applicants were neighbours.

RESOLVED: That no observations be made in respect of planning application Nos. 20/3360N, 20/3779N and 20/3231N.

Each Member present was individually polled for their vote and the motion was carried.

(Note: Councillor Adams declined to vote on application Nos. 20/3231N and 20/3231N.)

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- 20/3436N 414 Newcastle Road, CW2 5JF
Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 40 residential dwellings
100% affordable housing including associated infrastructure and new
site access – re-submission following refusal of application No. 18/5798N.

RESOLVED: That the following comments be submitted to Cheshire East Council in respect of planning application No. 20/3436N.

Each Member present was individually polled for their vote and the motion was carried.

- a) The Design and Access statement refers variously to 44 or 40 dwellings (i.e. section 5) and is confusing.
- The layout drawings in Section 5 differ greatly from the BDC layout document.
 - It states the development 'will enhance the local settlement and provide much needed quality housing for the area'. This implies either that Shavington does not have enough housing or the new housing already built was not of sufficient quality.
 - It does not correct the errors in the previous document (2018).
- b) Design and Access Statement (2018):
- Does not reflect the submitted plan; the plot size stated is larger than other submitted documents
 - Visual Analysis section: contains photo of 'Egerton Ave' which is not in the parish.
- (c) The Transport Statement, provided with the planning application, is the same as that provided with the August 2018 planning application and is out-of-date containing misleading information.
- The site information is incorrect in respect of plot size, dwelling layout and road layout.

- The bus information is incorrect.
 - The traffic survey was undertaken in early August 2018, during the school holidays. Subsequent to this survey, hundreds of new homes in Shavington and surrounding areas have been occupied and will have inevitably increased the regular vehicle numbers.
 - Visibility splays of 2.4m x 90m cannot be achieved from the proposed entrance: shrubbery and signage from businesses completely block the view of drivers exiting the site to the East.
- d) In general, the application appears to be a duplicate of the 2018 application.
- e) The applicant has not addressed any issues raised as a reason for refusal under application 18/5798N; viz:
- There is no Housing Needs Survey to demonstrate a need in Shavington for additional housing. Cheshire East Council's own housing supply figures demonstrate an appropriate supply and it supports the view that these houses are not needed.
 - The presence of bats within one of the buildings to be demolished is not addressed and remains an issue.
 - The layout design still fails to improve the character and quality of the area; in particular, demolishing a historic farmhouse destroys some of the very fabric that makes Shavington a desirable place to live.
- f) The access road remains poorly planned and dangerous when considered in the context of Diamond Close (occupied between Jan 2018 and Aug 2019) and the filling station access, which also serves ABP Motorsport, Playworld, and a newly-built warehouse.
- Newcastle Road is the busiest it has been since the A500 opened, and a road safety assessment should be supplied by the applicant addressing safety concerns in respect of vehicles and pedestrians. Pedestrians will be required to cross Newcastle Road at the Goodall's Corner traffic lights, which do not currently have pedestrian crossing facilities.
- If the application is approved, it should be conditioned to require the applicant to invest in a pedestrian crossing at the traffic lights.(See also (g) below.)
- g) There is no inclusive play area. It should not be necessary for children to cross Newcastle Road and Stock Lane/Crewe Road to access play areas.
- h) Shavington already has in excess of 1500 new dwelling applications currently approved; of these, 400 are affordable homes.
- i) Geotechnical Investigations findings:
- 'marginally elevated concentration of arsenic in ground water' which are (acknowledged) 8.9 times higher than Drinking Water Standards
 - Elevated concentrations of carbon dioxide and methane gases in ground. Seven dwellings specified as requiring special gas barriers to be built into the foundations. Who will inspect this installation to ensure that these houses do not have gases ingressing?
 - CEC Strategic Housing Dept objects to this application as submitted.
 - CEC Regulatory Services and Health applies condition for provision of EV Charger point for dwelling.
- j) Proposals must be for small schemes only (fewer than 10 dwellings).
- k) The drainage system on Newcastle Road is experiencing major problems with sewage and rainwater.
- l) The traffic lights are too close to the development. If there is a traffic collision on the M6, traffic would be diverted from the motorway onto this road.

280 QUARTERLY PARISH NEWSLETTER

In view of the Internal Auditor's criticism of the frequency of financial reporting to the Parish Council, the Clerk was now giving priority to the preparation of financial records for submission to Council meetings. One of the consequences was that she was no longer able to prepare articles for the newsletter. It had always been difficult to absorb this into her normal workload but was now more difficult.

Members were reminded that when the newsletters were introduced in September 2017, the Chairman took on responsibility for preparing the bulk of the content initially; however, owing to his own work commitments he was unable to continue with this, and it was then passed to the Clerk as an additional task and provided content to the contractor who collated the newsletter.

It may be necessary to defer issue of the next newsletter. In the meantime, there was a need to publish two flyers to inform residents of the arrangements for (a) Remembrance Sunday; and (b) Carols at Christmas, once the details had been finalised.

No decision was taken on this item.

(Note: At this point in the proceedings Councillor Adams withdrew from the meeting.)

281 SCHEME OF DELEGATION

The Parish Council was asked to approve the following additional delegation to the Clerk.

- Social media posts. The Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the appropriate Committee, or the Council Chairman, to agree items for social media publicity.

The practical implications of this were that if a Member wished to promote something on social media, they must clear it with the Chairman of the appropriate Committee, or the Council Chairman, at the same time notifying the Clerk.

RESOLVED: That the additional delegation to the Clerk, as indicated above, be approved for inclusion in the Scheme of Delegation.

Each Member present was individually polled for their vote and the motion was carried.

(Note: Owing to technical difficulties, Councillor Buchanan was unable to vote, and withdrew from the meeting at this point in the proceedings.)

282 INFORMATION REQUESTED BY COUNCIL

At the last meeting, the Clerk was asked to report on the following:

282.1 Accountancy packages used by other Clerks

The Clerk had made enquiries of other Parish Clerks about their own accountancy packages and her report was submitted.

The Clerk was asked to contact Scribe for a quotation and add it to the October agenda.

282.2 Quotation from accountancy firm to prepare accounts

The Clerk had contacted Afford Bond for a quotation to prepare the accounts on behalf of the Parish Council. The quotation was not yet available, but in view of the decision in Minute No. 282.1 above, was now unnecessary.

283 INSURANCE

The Parish Council was asked to renew its insurance cover with effect from 1 October 2020.

Eight documents from Came & Company, the insurance broker, were submitted as follows:

- Explanatory email from Came & Company, the brokers
- Policy Summary
- Policy Changes
- Policy Schedule
- Statement of Fact
- Statement of Needs
- Full policy document
- Legal advice availability

RESOLVED: (a) That the Parish Council renew its insurance policy with effect from 1 October 2020, through Came & Company; and

(b) That the insurance premium in the sum of £2,457.28 be approved.

Each Member present was individually polled for their vote and the motion was carried.

284 INFORMATION REPORT ON PARISH COUNCIL EVENTS

The Parish Council received information about the following events:

284.1 Remembrance Sunday – 8 November 2020

- Rev. A Taylor of the New Life Church had been invited to participate in the Service and had also been invited to attend the Community Engagement Committee meeting on 15 September 2020.
- Rev. Rachael Griffiths, Rev. Den Harding and the Headteacher of Shavington Primary School had also been invited to the Committee meeting.
- Shavington Primary School had been asked about the possibility of making either the school field or the school car park available in the event of the service needing to be conducted outside. The Clerk had already contacted the school about the availability of its main hall and this had been followed-up; a response was awaited.

Liam Lewis, the Chief Financial and Operations Officer, had reported that the current guidance would not permit outdoor concerts and sporting events where people congregated; on this basis, it was unlikely that access would be granted. He expected to be able to confirm week commencing 31 August 2020. There was no update at the meeting.

- The road closure application had been forwarded to CEC with a request that the road be closed from 8.00 am to 12 noon.
- An invitation to Remembrance Sunday had been sent to the 2nd Shavington Brownies and 12th Shavington Scouts.

284.2 Carols at Christmas – 20 December 2020

The Communications Committee was exploring the possibility of changing the venue for 'Carols at Christmas', to the church field opposite to St Mark's Church. Reverend Rachael Griffiths had agreed to this proposal but had stated that there must be a Covid-19 risk assessment carried out, taking into account the prevailing government guidance at that time. She had also mentioned congregation singing. The current guidance was that small groups of singers (professional or non-professional) would be permitted to sing (indoors or outdoors) from 15 August 2020 but there should be no audience participation.

The Committee had suggested that a 20ft high Christmas tree be purchased. The Clerk had contacted a local supplier for a quotation, and this would be in the region of £500.

285 VILLAGE HALL RE-OPENING

The risk assessment by Rhino Safety Ltd. was submitted.

The Parish Council was asked to consider arrangements for the re-opening of the Village Hall and agree a date for re-opening.

Comments were made as follows

- The key code outside the Village Hall to be changed frequently.
- A maximum of 24 persons to be allowed in the hall at any one time.
- Social-distancing of 2m to be observed.
- One-way system to be created, with directional arrows placed on the floor.
- Two sanitisers to be ordered.
- The Clerk to purchase anti-bacterial wipes and paper towels.
- Provide a list of touch points for the cleaning contractor.
- Ask hirers to clean all touch points at the end of their hire period.

It was agreed that a small group of Members should be given the responsibility for dealing with the details of the re-opening.

RESOLVED: (a) That a Task Group be set up comprising Councillors Kevin Gibbs, M Ferguson, R Hancock and J Hassall;

(b) That the Group be authorised to make arrangements to enable the Village Hall to re-open safely;

(c) That the hall be re-opened on 18 September 2020 (or sooner if practicable); and

(d) That in the event of supplies being required, the Group contact the Clerk who would order as required.

Each Member present was individually polled for their vote and the motion was carried.

286 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That in accordance with Paragraph 1 (2) of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items owing to the confidential nature of the business to transacted and the public interest would not be served in disclosing that information.

287 RESOURCING

(Reason for exclusion: Potential discussion of matters relating to the Clerk's employment.)

At the meeting held on 23 July 2020, Members considered the report of the Internal Auditor, who had been critical of the way in which the accounts had been maintained throughout the year and reported that in his opinion, the system of internal controls was lacking and therefore, was *inadequate and ineffective for the purpose intended and the Council, therefore, does not have a system in place.*

In the Clerk's opinion, the resourcing issues related principally to the fact that the contracted hours of 20 per week were inadequate for the workload. A more realistic assessment would be at least 30 per week.

RESOLVED: That the Parish Council consider increasing the Clerk's contracted hours with effect from 1 April 2021, as part of its discussion on the budget proposals 2021-2022.

Each Member present was individually polled for their vote and the motion was carried.

288 AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PARISH COUNCIL AND SHAVINGTON VILLAGE FESTIVAL COMMITTEE

(Reason for exclusion: Contractual matter between the Parish Council and the Village Festival Committee.)

At the meeting held on 23 July 2020, the Parish Council approved an agreement between itself and Shavington Village Festival Committee.

On 30 June 2020, the Clerk sought legal advice from Lynne Thornton, solicitor but in the absence of a response, she submitted her own draft to the Council. The agreement was approved. Subsequent to that meeting, Lynne Thornton replied and had made further suggestions, which necessitated amendments to the agreement.

RESOLVED: (a) That the suggested amendments to the agreement between the Parish Council and Shavington Village Festival be approved; and

(b) That the revised agreement relating to the Festival Committee's use of the Village Hall storage building, be submitted to both parties.

Each Member present was individually polled for their vote and the motion was carried.

289 140 MAIN ROAD, SHAVINGTON

(Reason for exclusion: Potential contractual matter between the Parish Council and the Borough Council.)

The Parish Council was asked to decide if it wished to make application to Cheshire East Council for an asset transfer of 140 Main Road, Shavington.

On 18 August 2020, the Clerk had received an email from the CEC Estates Manager about this matter. The Clerk had replied with a number of questions.

A list of the Clerk's questions and the responses from the Estates Manager was provided.

RESOLVED: (a) That Cheshire East Council be informed that the Parish Council expressed interest in acquiring 140 Main Road as a Parish Council asset, but contingent upon the following:

- Structural building survey to be carried out to provide an estimate of the costs to bring the building into use.
- Independent legal advice.
- To consult with residents, once the cost of refurbishment was known, to establish if there was support for the capital expenditure.
- Agreement between Cheshire East Council and the Parish Council on the terms of acquisition (to be discussed in further detail to include whether the asset is to be (a) transferred for a nominal fee or sold at market value, (b) to be leased, or (c) the freehold transferred to the Parish Council).

(b) That arrangements be made for the building to be surveyed; and

(c) That when the refurbishment costs were available, the Parish Council consider the matter again.

Each Member present was individually polled for their vote and the motion was carried.

290 VILLAGE HALL – FLOOR TREATMENT

Councillor Adams contacted the Clerk during August, commenting that the parquet floor in the Village Hall appeared to be in need of sanding and varnishing. She had received a leaflet at the Village Hall from a Nantwich company which offered this service.

The quotation was in excess of £1,000 and it would be necessary for a further two quotations to be sought; however, Members agreed that as the Village Hall was due to re-open and the work would require closure of the Village Hall for three days, it was agreed that no action be taken at this time.

RESOLVED: That the Parish Council decline to arrange for the Village Hall floor to be sanded and varnished.

Each Member present was individually polled for their vote and the motion was carried

291 APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE – COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

(Reason for exclusion: Identification of an individual.)

It was reported that the Appointments Committee conducted interviews for the Communications Manager post, week commencing 24 August 2020. Five candidates were interviewed, and Mr Tim Dobson had been appointed with effect from 7 September 2020 and was in attendance.

292 RE-ADMITTANCE OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That the press and public be re-admitted to the meeting.

Each Member present was individually polled for their vote and the motion was carried

293 CONSULTATION ON PLANNING CHANGES

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) was inviting comments on two consultations as follows.

Changes to the Current Planning System Observations by 17 September 2020

White Paper: Planning for the Future Observations by 15 October 2020

RESOLVED: (a) That the Parish Council decline to comment on the document 'Changes to the Current Planning System; and

(b) That the White Paper: Planning for the Future, be submitted to the meeting to be held on 7 October 2020.

Each Member present was individually polled for their vote and the motion was carried

294 FUTURE MEETINGS

15 September 2020	Community Engagement Comm
30 September 2020	Environment & Recreation Committee
7 October 2020	Parish Council
28 October 2020	Finance Committee

.....Chairman

The meeting commenced at 7.30 pm and concluded at 11.00 pm