THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF

THE SHOTTON PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 24th FEBRUARY 2025.

Present: Councillor R Hardy (Chair)
I Cochrane, RB Lacey, S Maitland,
H Mountain, M Mountain, M Parker K Wood

Apologies: AW Bright, G Bright, J Bright, M Cooper, L Cox, LA Hill, A Kelly
County Cllr C Hood

TIME SET ASIDE FOR QUESTIONS/ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

As there were no members of the public present , no issues were raised.

1927. **TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

RESOLVED that the apologies for absence received on behalf of AW Bright, G Bright, J Bright, M Cooper, L Cox, LA Hill, A Kelly and County Councillor C Hood be received and noted.

1928. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

No declarations of interest were received.

RESOLVED that, the information given be noted.

1929. **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27th JANUARY 2025**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th January 2025, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, be approved, and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

1930. **GROUNDSMANS REPORT**

Apologies were offered on behalf of the Groundsman who was unable to attend.
The Clerk confirmed that works and maintenance were proceeding well.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted.

1931. **COUNCILLORS REPORTS OF THEIR ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS ON BEHALF OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

As there had been no meetings attended, no reports were provided.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted.

1932. **COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT**

Apologies had been received from County Councillor C Hood who was unable to attend.

County Councillor I Cochrane provided details of current DCC matters including:

- 5% increase in Council Tax and “vanity projects”
- DCC purchase of Milburngate
- DCC offices to move to Aykley Heads and old County Hall site to be sold and developed

- AAPs to be changed to Networks later in year however staffing details are still to be finalised

RESOLVED that, the information given be noted.

1933. **SHOTTON PARTNERSHIP AND AAP UPDATE**

Councillor R Hardy provided a progress report on recent matters and covered the following items:

AAP

- Special AAP meeting had previously allocated £61k to be used for establishment and development of an Area Youth Consortium. A further £7k had now been allocated and further details awaited

Partnership

- Fun & Food Half term sessions
- Trip to Newcastle Theatre
- The outstanding Digital Durham application had now agreed almost £25k towards IT equipment and replacement laptops.
- YIF youth work at the Youth Centre continues to be developed and plans were in place for after March when the current contract with Groundwork comes to an end.

RESOLVED that, the information given be noted.

11934. **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

i. **Schedule of Payments**

RESOLVED that the cheques and payments read out and detailed by the Clerk for February 2025 be endorsed and approved for payment.

ii. **Review of Adequacy of Internal Audit and Internal Control arrangements**

RESOLVED that the existing Internal Audit and Internal control requirements were more than adequate for their purposes and would remain in effect.

iii. **Insurance Renewals 2025/26**

RESOLVED that the proposal from Zurich Municipal dated 1st March confirming the LTA renewal premium of £4,466.69 be noted. Some adjustments to All Risks schedule were required to take account of additional planters in the village

iv. **Review of Shotton Parish Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Asset Register and Risk Register**

It was noted that the Risk Register was a live document and was regularly updated to take account of the risks specific to major capital projects. Similarly, the Asset register was updated as and when assets were disposed or added by the Clerk and Members were provided with updates .

RESOLVED that the Councils Standing Orders, Asset Register and Risk Register as reviewed be noted.

FURTHER RESOLVED that updated Financial Regulations, based on the new Model issued by NALC be adopted and implemented with immediate effect.

1935. **PLANNING MATTERS**

RESOLVED that the DCC planning matters (applications, approvals, appeals and withdrawals) details of which had been circulated electronically to all Members, be received and noted.

1936. **COUNCILLOR WORKING GROUPS – PROGRESS REPORTS**

i. **VE- Day Commemoration 8th May 2025**

RESOLVED that the date be noted..

1937. **PROGRESS REPORT OF THE CLERK**

The Clerk reported on the following items:

a) YIF Community Outreach Youth Hub

Good progress on all matters and working towards March accounting deadline and outcomes to SIB.

The Clerk continued to chase up SSE the electricity provider as no invoice had been received to date and still SSE say the meter is not energised. Bearing in mind their current contract ends on 28th February, without renewing terms, the Council would be on their variable rate of supply which is more expensive. The supplies to both the Parish Meeting Rooms and the Recreation Ground had already been transferred to Scottish Power on better terms however as the meter was de-energised on the National database, it was not possible to change suppliers for the Youth Centre.

The Clerk would continue to press SSE for a solution and was taking the matter up with the Energy Ombudsman as we should not be penalised or have to renew a contract when the options are outside of our control due to a continued failing by SSE to address matters.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted, the actions taken by the Clerk be endorsed further developments be awaited.

b) Clerk Additional Hours

In February, 17 additional hours had been worked by the Clerk.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted.

c) Elections Update – 1 May 2025

The Clerk provided details of the critical deadlines and requirements on prospective candidates for the forthcoming Parish Council elections, it being noted that £9k had been allocated in the budget to deal with the cost of a contested election.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted and further developments be awaited.

d) Shotton Community Garden Planters Transfer

Members considered a request from Shotton Community Garden Group and following discussion **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council agree to take on ownership through a formal transfer agreement of the 5 wooden garden planters (valued at £400 each) from Shotton Community Garden, it being noted that the group would continue to maintain and plant the planters going forward.

e) Replacement MUGA LED Floodlights at Community Park

The Clerk confirmed that AAP approval of the NHG from County Councillor Cochrane was imminent subject to closing off some information required for previous NHGs with DCC.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted and further developments be awaited.

f) Defibrillators

RESOLVED that the access code for the defibrillator at The Nest Fishery be passed to the Clerk so he could arrange for it to be updated and that the Clerk be authorised to purchase replacement Defib Pads for all 3 locations.

g) Council Website & IT Matters

The Clerk was still working on updating the content for the new website with the provider before release and continued to progress the review of the Councils IT systems.

Specific one to one access had been requested with IRIS (payroll software provider) at a cost of £290 +vat to ensure the transfer of payroll data to the new Staffology system was fully integrated and complete. This had been arranged for 27th February.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted.

1938. **CORRESPONDENCE, BULLETINS & CIRCULARS**

- Co-operative Bank now part of Coventry Building Society
- DSCC - AAP NHG Monitor Updates - Defibs Phase 1 & 2, & Play Equipment

RESOLVED that the correspondence, bulletins and circulars, details of which were read out by the Clerk be received, and the information contained therein, be noted.

1939. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

RESOLVED that the next meeting will be held at the Community Hub on Monday 31st March 2025 at 6.00pm.

FURTHER RESOLVED that no meeting be held in April due to the proximity of the elections and that the following meeting would be the Annual meeting of the new Council in May.

CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIRMAN .....

Date: 31st March 2025