



# SHIPSTON-ON-STOUR TOWN COUNCIL Minutes

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## MINUTES OF AN **EXTRAORDINARY** JUNE MEETING OF SHIPSTON ON STOUR TOWN COUNCIL HELD VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE COMMENCING AT AT 6.00PM ON TUESDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> JUNE 2020

**Present:** - Town Cllrs: S. Saunders (Mayor), I. Cooper (Deputy Mayor), P. Cox, F. Ivens, P. Tesh, M. Westwood, P. Cowley, G. Kelly, V. Murphy (linked via phone)

Public: 1            Press: 0            WCC & SDC 0            Clerk: A. Packer

### INTRODUCTION

Cllr Saunders, Mayor of Shipston Town Council welcomed members of the Town Council to an extraordinary meeting of the Town Council which, due to restrictions relating to COVID-19, was held via the 'Zoom' platform

#### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Cllr White

#### 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – none

#### 3 Clerk explained that a situation began the previous evening with unauthorised visitors setting up camp on the Mayo Road Recreation Ground adjacent to the Rugby Club. Liaison with District Council, County Council, Warwickshire Police resulting in the trustees of the Mayo Road Recreation Ground charity meeting to decide on a plan of action to recover the land. Clerk read out the following:

The land is held upon Charitable Trust by "Mayo Road Recreation Ground, Shipston on Stour Warwickshire" charity on behalf of Shipston Town Council

Earlier today the trustees met to discuss the unauthorised occupation of the land by persons unknown and agreed unanimously to instruct bailiffs to take appropriate action to recover the land, under provisions of Common Law.

The Charity is requesting financial assistance to cover the cost of the action of the bailiffs.

When the land was gifted to the Council in 1972 it was a condition that "the Council will hold the land on charitable trust for the benefit of the inhabitants of Shipston and District in its uncontrolled discretion"

Councillors are asked to consider that the site is also occupied by the nursery currently open for the provision of care to the children of key workers, and the actions and behaviours of the unauthorised occupants is putting at risk the health and wellbeing of the children of the nursery.

#### 4 In view of the Council's responsibility under the conveyance, members are asked to consider approving the provision of financial assistance to the Charitable Trust

Clerk confirmed that the Police traveller liaison officer had advised relevant action that could be taken and the bailiff company was contacted. The quoted cost of service of the notice was £595 plus VAT, the cost of removal was £750 plus VAT. Additional costs would be incurred if equipment needed for physical removal. Costs based on the information supplied to the bailiffs of there being approximately 5 caravans.

Clerk confirmed that a Notice had been served at the site at 4.15pm on instruction of the Trustees and the occupants were due to leave by 7pm the following day. It was anticipated that the second stage may not be required.

#### 5 OPEN FORUM

Member of the public present, Chairman of the Rugby Club, Mr Scobie addressed the Council. He explained that the nursery are tenants of theirs and that the Rugby Club are beneficiaries of the work the Clerk is doing and to the decisions the Trust has taken. Appreciating that the Trust has no funds, the Rugby Club offered to fund 50%

of the bailiff costs. This would be 50% of the initial serving of the notice and should the next stage be required they would be open to a conversation with a view to making a similar contribution for any further stages.

Cllr Saunders thanked Mr Scobie for the generous offer

Mr Scobie made public thanks to the diligent work of the Clerk and the fact that it is being dealt with much more quickly than anyone expected. He went on to say that the matter has caused a lot of stress to the members of the Rugby Club so having somebody working on it so well has been massively appreciated.

Cllr Saunders noted the appreciation of the discreet way in which Clerk had been dealing with the matter

Discussions regarding cleaning of the site of faeces and clerk confirmed that Lawns 2 Mow would make an assessment once vacated.

6

**Cllr Saunders proposed to endorse the actions of the trustees in relation to the recovery of the land – seconded by Cllr Cooper – unanimous (Cllr Murphy confirmed via phone line) – motion carried**

(Cllr Saunders noted that whilst the upper figure is not known STC has the ballpark figure)

7

**Cllr Saunders proposed to fund from council 50 % of the above noted actions – seconded by Cllr Kelly – unanimous (Cllr Murphy via phone line) – motion carried**

Cllr Cooper asked if there were any measures in place to safeguard the site tonight. Clerk said it would be likely similar to last night with the Police paying passing attention. General security of other areas of the town discussed.

Mr Scobie said that a large lock which was on another gate had been removed this afternoon and a further lock has been added to improve security. Pitch rollers have been put in position in front of the gates to make access difficult. A local firm may be able to create a chicane of concrete blocks to enable cars to access, but not allow towing vehicles. For future consideration of security.

Cllr Tesh noted a review is needed of open spaces, with consideration of wooden bollards, demountable bollards.

Cllr Tesh noted that in other areas, padlocks are cut through and left, looking like still locked, ready for a return later to an already insecure site

Mr Scobie said the gates at the Rugby Club removed the gate from the hinges.

Cllr Westwood reported that occupants have been jumping over fences and looking at what is in people's gardens

Clerk advised that residents should telephone the police if there are any problems

**Cllr Saunders proposed closing the meeting at 6.26pm – seconded by Cllr Cooper – unanimous – motion carried**

Signed.....

Date

Councillor Sheelagh Saunders

Town Mayor, Shipston on Stour Town Council