

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH
COUNCIL held on 2 September 2002 at the Vernon Institute, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor Mrs M Anderson
Councillor A Bailey (in the Chair)
Councillor CW Eyton (Tree Warden)
Councillor Mrs P Humphrey
Councillor Mrs J Johnson
Councillor B Kerr
Councillor C Moss
Councillor R Shukla
Councillor RA Storrar
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar
Councillor A Warrington
Councillor Mrs J Young

Mr B Jones (Acting Homewatch Co-ordinator)
Mr H Dobson (Independent Internal Auditor)

162 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

Councillor JA Marsden
Councillor Mrs D Whitton

163 MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT

Councillor C Moss declared an interest in respect of item 6(d) on the agenda- Parish Room Rates – as he was the landlord. It was agreed that the item be referred to the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. (Minute No 166(d)/2002 refers)

164 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 5 August 2002 be confirmed as a correct record.

165 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the Minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

(a) Payments made since the meeting of the Council held on 5 August 2002:

Financial Year 2002/2003	£	Cheque No
Miss A Stuart (Contribution to float for Lord Major's Parade)	50.00	101531
Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council (Street Cleaning & Playing Field maintenance)	1,185.35	101532
Mrs S Hudspeth (Salary)	414.61	101533
Mrs S Hudspeth (Expenses)	51.60	101534
Chester City Council (Rates for Parish Room)	105.00	DD

(b) Receipts

Interest to 24 August 2002 (Treasurer Account)	0.10
Interest to 21 August 2002 (14 day Interest Account)	84.10

(c) Insurance Cover

The Council considered the contents of two letters received from Cornhill Insurance following the Clerk's approach regarding public liability insurance in respect of the recently acquired land on Fiddlers Lane. It was noted that the Policy would extend to include the Council's new legal liabilities. Cover was subject to the terms, conditions and exclusions of the Policy and the Limit of Indemnity at £5,000,000.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the contents of the letters be noted; and
- (2) Councillor Mrs Humphrey be requested to obtain two "No Admittance" signs for erection on the boundary of the field.

(d) Parish Room Rates

RESOLVED:

That consideration of Parish Room rates be referred to the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee scheduled for 19 September 2002.

(e) Report of the Internal Auditor

The Internal Auditor had completed his report on the Council's Accounts for the Financial Year 2001/2002. He had a number of questions for the Clerk and made three recommendations.

RESOLVED:

That the Internal Auditor's report be considered at the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee along with the Clerk's response to the questions asked.

(a) Police

RESOLVED:

That as PC Gareth Cooper was not in attendance at the meeting the Police report be deferred until the next meeting of the Council.

(b) Homewatch

Mr Jones, the Acting Homewatch Co-ordinator, presented the Council with a progress report on the Homewatch's activities. Members noted that an Action Plan was now in place and a meeting was arranged for the following week with police officials to discuss the Homewatch operation and future arrangements. There were a number of concerns which it was hoped could be ironed out so that the Homewatch and the Police could work together effectively for the benefit of the village as a whole.

Mr Jones requested that the Homewatch be allowed to use the Parish Council's notice boards and meeting room.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the reports be received; and

(2) approval be given for the Homewatch to have use of the Council's notice boards and meeting room (on dates supplied).

(c) Police Response/Nuisance Activity

At the meeting of the Council held on 1 July 2002 there had been concerns raised over the unacceptable anti-social behaviour of a small minority of young people and the police's response times when called out.

Consequently, the Council had invited the Rural Inspector to the meeting. The Constabulary had recently reorganised its staff and Inspector Geoffrey Williams was now responsible for the rural area. He had been formally invited to attend the meeting but had declined the invitation due to numerous long standing commitments. He informed that PC Cooper, who had been in attendance at the last meeting on 5 August 2002, would provide him with a full briefing on the proceedings which he would then discuss with the Crime and Disorder Partnership and the Divisional Commander.

The Clerk had asked Inspector Williams if he could attend the Council's Community Safety Committee meeting scheduled for 7:30pm on 11 September 2002.

The Inspector had again responded informing that he had a previous engagement and could not attend the Committee meeting. He intended to make contact with the Chairman of the Homewatch, Mr McIlwrick and Mr Jones, in the near future.

Inspector Williams also informed that with the number of Parish Councils and Area Groups in the rural area he did not, as a matter of routine, intend to attend Parish meetings. These meetings would, when it was required, be attended by a Rural Officer and when necessary by the Rural Sergeant. He would attend the Area Panel meetings and deal with 'strategic' issues concerning the area.

If at any time representatives of the Parish Council wished to speak to Inspector Williams he was willing to meet them at Chester Police Station, he also supplied his telephone number and informed that he would respond to e-mails.

Members were concerned over the dilution of police resources in the village and agreed that communication with the Constabulary was currently taking on a negative tone.

The Chairman reported that he had been in touch with Inspector Williams and arrangements were in hand to hold a meeting between himself, Mr Jones and the Inspector to discuss the role of the Homewatch within the Parish. He also intended to present the views of the Council on current policing arrangements and perceived communication problems.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the report be received; and

(2) Councillor Mrs JE Storrar be invited to attend the meeting to be arranged with Inspector Geoffrey Williams.

168 CHESHIRE ASSOCIATION OF TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

(a) Annual Meeting

The Council was reminded that the Annual Meeting would be held at 3:30pm on Tuesday, 29 October 2002 at Northwich Memorial Hall.

(b) Annual Parish Conference

The Council was reminded that Cheshire County Council's Annual Parish Conference would be held at 7:00pm on Tuesday, 29 October 2002 at Northwich Memorial Hall.

At the last meeting of the Council it had been agreed that Councillors RA and Mrs JE Storrar and the Chairman would attend both events. Councillor Kerr would be in attendance as Chairman of NALC.

The Chairman reported that due to work commitments he would not be able to attend the Cheshire Association of Town and Parish Councils' Annual Meeting but would join Members at 7:00pm for Cheshire County Council's Annual Parish Conference.

(c) Annual Meeting – Notice of Motions

The Annual Meeting provided an opportunity for Parish Councils to discuss and canvas support on issues that were important to them. The Council had given Notice of three motions it wished to propose at the Annual Meeting (Minute No 149(b)/2002 refers). Those Members who would attend the Annual Meeting agreed to sort out between themselves who would propose, speak to and second each of the motions.

169 BYELAW – NO BALL GAMES

Councillor Mrs JE Storrar reported that there had been no objections received following the Public Notice in the local press. The City Council had received a letter on 27 August 2002 from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister confirming that the Byelaw would come into operation on 30 August 2002. Appropriate replacement signage would be erected on the grassed amenity areas.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be received;
- (2) Councillor Mrs JE Storrar be commended for her hard work in bringing about the byelaw;
- (3) Inspector Williams be briefed on the byelaw and discussions be held on how he proposes to enforce it; and
- (4) a monitoring report be brought to the next meeting of the Council.

170 PARISH PLAN

(a) Parish Plan Steering Group

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Plan Steering Group held on 12 August 2002 be received.

(b) Bid for Funding to Compile a Parish Plan

The Council discussed the preparation of a bid to the Countryside Agency for funding necessary to prepare a Parish Plan.

It was noted that drawing up the bid was a job of some magnitude but assistance had been promise by Vivien Ellis of the Cheshire Community Council. Mrs Ellis had also informed that she would be able to attend the next meeting of the Parish Plan Steering Group scheduled for 7:30pm on Wednesday, 30 October 2002.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be received;

(2) Councillors B Kerr, A Bailey and the Clerk be requested to prepare the bid in consultation with Mrs Ellis; and

(3) All members of the Council be invited to attend the next meeting of the Parish Plan Steering Group to be held in the Vernon Institute.

171 HIGHWAY MATTERS

(a) Church Road – Temporary Prohibition of Traffic

Work was complete and the road was now open. There had been a marked drop in trade but compensation was not payable. The paths and roadway were dirty and there were potholes by the Surgery and some diversion signs still remained.

RESOLVED:

That the District Engineer be requested to take appropriate action.

(b) Fiddlers Lane/Church Road Junction

The road surface was at an appropriate standard.

RESOLVED:

That the road surface at the Fiddlers Lane/Church Road junction be no longer monitored on a monthly basis.

(c) No 28 Bus

Councillor RA Storrar reported that he still intended to speak to the Manager of Chester City Transport. It was noted that the residents of Wain House were no too inconvenienced.

Whip Cord Lane was the problem because of parking on both sides of the road. It was difficult for drivers to squeeze their buses between parked vehicles.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

(d) Church Road Bus Shelter

There was a hole in the roof of the bus shelter on Church Road.

RESOLVED:

That Mr B Ebbrell be asked to mend the bus shelter.

(e) Litter Bins

The litter bins at the bus terminus and the Church Road bus stop had been vandalised.

Following the erection of the new bus shelter the litter bin at the Ridings bus stop required repositioning.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council be requested to remove the bin at the Church Road bus stop and reposition the bin at the Ridings bus stop subject to receipt of satisfactory quotations; and
- (2) no action be taken with regard to the bin at the bus terminus for the present as it still is able to serve a purpose and is not dangerous.

(f) Deeside Park Junctions Study

It was noted that Christine Russell MP had agreed to check periodically that the scheme for the road junction A540/A5117 was on target. She would let the Clerk know if there was any slippage.

(g) Proposed Pelican Crossing - Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School

Councillor RA Storrar had no progress to report.

(h) Potholes and Grass Verges

The District Engineer reported that he would attend to the pothole at the junction of Meadows Lane and Hermitage Road.

Councillor B Kerr reported that there was now a pothole at the junction of Church Road and Saughall Hey, possibly caused by the weight of the diverted double decker buses.

The District Engineer also reported that grass verges were often part of the highway. It really depended on the road in question. For instance, on Saughall Hey, there was a wide grass verge which was not highway but an amenity area, maintained by the City Council/Housing Trust. Generally, a grass verge would be highway but of course there could be exceptions.

The District Engineer informed that Chester City Council was considering a byelaw or similar regarding parking on grass verges. Currently the Highway Authority could only take action if it could prove damage had been caused.

Members were interested to see that the District Engineer's information was at odds with what PC Gareth Cooper had told the Council at its last meeting.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) the District Engineer be requested to repair the pothole at the junction of Church Road and Saughall Hey.

(i) Sustran Cycle Route

Councillor RA Storrar reported that he had been approached by a resident of the village who was concerned over the danger of children cycling across the old railway bridge on Sea Hill Road. A more convenient access/exit pathway to the cycle track had been suggested.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the Council take no action on the proposal; and

(2) it be noted that Councillor RA Storrar intended to approach Community Councillor John Griffiths, over the border in Wales, regarding the proposed access/exit pathway to the cycle track.

(j) Hedgerow - Hermitage Road, Little Saughall

Councillor J Young reported that the hedge had become so overgrown that the path could not be used.

RESOLVED:

That the District Engineer be requested to cut the hedge back and claim the costs from the landowners responsible for the hedge.

(k) Hedgerow - Fiddlers Lane

The hedges around the Council's own land required trimming.

RESOLVED:

That Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council be requested to trim the hedges subject to the receipt of a satisfactory quotation.

172 ENVIRONMENT MATTERS

(a) Play Area Inspection - Fiddlers Lane Playing Field

The play equipment was being inspected on a weekly basis and was satisfactory and the field's drainage was fine.

(b) Golden Jubilee Park

(i) MANWEB

Councillor B Kerr reported on proceedings of a site visit undertaken between him and Edwin Davies of MANWEB.

The electric cables had been inspected and confirmation had been given that they would be put underground. The details would be reported to the Golden Jubilee Park Panel.

(ii) Michael Corns

Councillor B Kerr reported that there would be a site visit with a representative of Michael Corns, the firm recommended to the Council by the Cheshire Playing Fields Association, at 11:00am on Wednesday, 11 September 2002. Members were asked to attend

(iii) Landform

Councillor B Kerr informed that he would chase representatives of Landform for the promised quotation.

173 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the following be received:

Planning Committee held on 5 August 2002
External Funding Meeting held on 8 August 2002

174 VERNON INSTITUTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

RESOLVED:

That the Finance and General Purposes Committee be requested to consider what help, if any, the Council could offer the Vernon Institute Management Committee to rejuvenate the Vernon Institute.

175 SAUGHALL YOUTH CLUB

The Council received a progress report on the activities of the Youth Club. It was noted that help and practical support was needed to assist in its running.

RESOLVED:

That an appeal for help, on behalf of the Youth Club, be included in the Council's next Newsletter.

176 PARISH COUNCIL SURGERIES

RESOLVED:

That the Parish Council's Surgeries rota for the next five weeks be as follows:

Date	Member
7 September 2002	Councillor A Warrington
14 September 2002	Councillor Mrs J Johnson
21 September 2002	Councillor C Moss
28 September 2002	Councillor A Bailey
5 October 2002	Councillor B Kerr

177 COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED

The following communications had been received:

- letter dated 28 August 2002 from Christine Russell MP agreeing to check periodically that the scheme (Road Junction A540/A5117 – Saughall) is still on target.

Noted.

- correspondence dated 21, 23 and 27 August 2002 from Power Systems regarding the power cables that cross the Golden Jubilee Park and the implications of their proposed removal.

To Golden Jubilee Park Panel.

- letter dated 13 August 2002 from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister/DEFRA addressed to all the Chairs of Parish and Town Councils in England informing that those bodies who are currently notified rather than consulted on planning issues, such as parish councils, will not lose the right in advance of the consultation on the document "Sustainable Communities - Delivering through Planning". Local planning authorities may not determine an application within 14 days of notifying a parish council, and must take into account any representations received from it.

Noted.

- letter dated 13 August 2002 from Chester City Council's Project Support Officer informing that the Parish Partnership Reception will be on Wednesday, 27 November 2002 at 7:30pm at the Town Hall, Chester. Please hold the date in your diary.

Noted – Date in diaries.

- letter dated 26 August 2002 from Mr Bryan Jones, Acting Chairman of the Saughall Homewatch requesting permission to use the Parish Council's notice boards when appropriate and Parish Room for its meetings on the first Tuesday evening of the month at 8pm in January, March, May, July, September and November 2003 and other ad hoc meetings to be communicated when necessary.

Agreed but noted that the Council's occupancy of the Parish Room was itself under review.

- letter dated 27 August 2002 from Cover Plus enclosing a brochure to keep the Council up to date on its latest information regarding the hosting of the Website.

Noted.

- letter dated 14 August 2002 from Chester City Council's Culture and Leisure Services Officer informing that the Local Panel has allocated £3,200 from its general fund this financial year to support the Golden Jubilee Park Project, as set out in the Clerk's application letter of 30 June 2002.

Noted.

- e-mail from Clive Roberts of Chester City Council asking in the light of the above funding allocation whether the Council still needs a Community Facilities and Rural Playground Grant that the Clerk applied for. (Chester City Council has not informed the Council formally whether the bid was successful even though a response was promised by the end of June 2002.)

Councillor RA Storrar and the Clerk to contact Clive Roberts.

- letter dated 22 July 2002 from Colonel DAH Shaw, Commander Army Presentation Team inviting Members to a presentation about recent changes in the Army – The Army for Today. The presentation begins at 6:30pm on Thursday, 26 September 2002 at the Town Hall, Chester.

Noted.

- letter from Ms A Stuart informing about the hard work put into the float for the Lord Mayor's Parade.

Noted.

- letter dated August 2002 from the Lord Mayor, Councillor B Crowe, requesting donations and help with regard to his Christmas Parcel Appeal 2002.

Noted.

- e-mail and information on funding opportunities, WREN factsheet, Local and Regional Funders Fact Pack and Village & Community Hall Funders Fact Pack.

To Finance and General Purposes Committee.

178 CIRCULARS

The following circulars had been received. Anyone wishing to see a copy would contact the Clerk.

- Minutes of Chester Police Forum Meeting held on 8 July 2002. Next meeting will be on 7 October 2002 at 7:00pm at the Town Hall, Chester.
- Agendas for the next meeting of Chester City Council's Chester Rural North Local Panel scheduled for 7:00pm on Thursday, 12 September 2002 at the Vernon Institute, Saughall.
- The Countryside Agency's Vital Villages Update.
- Cheshire Community Council's The Cheshire Cauldron Newsletter – Summer 2002