

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH
COUNCIL held on 2 December 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 JA Marsden
Councillor C Moss
Councillor R Shukla
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar
Councillor A Warrington
Councillor Mrs D Whitton
Councillor Mrs J Young

Mr B Jones (Acting Homewatch Co-ordinator)

209 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

Councillor RA Storrar
PC G Cooper

210 CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor C Moss declared an interest in respect of item 21 on the agenda - Parish Room. He was the owner of the property and as such the Parish Council's landlord. Councillor Moss left the meeting whilst the item of business was discussed.

211 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 14 October 2002 and 4 and 26 November 2002 be confirmed as a correct record.

212 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute No 187(b) - Golden Jubilee Park

Councillors Kerr and Mrs Johnson had spoken over the positioning of the access gate to Mrs Johnson's land. Mrs Johnson was happy for the gate to be erected, where in the interests of road safety, the District Engineer had recommended.

Minute No 193(a) – Accounts

Councillor Mrs J Young reported that she had planted the spring bulbs in the village. Their location would be obvious in the Spring when the flowers bloomed.

Minute No 208 - Golden Jubilee Park

Concerns were raised over resolutions (2) and (3) as follows:

- “(2) the Cheshire Playing Fields Association be requested to draw up a detailed specification in relation to the work required to develop the Golden Jubilee Park;
- (3) when the specification has been drawn up it be issued to the four contractors and they be requested to resubmit quotations for the work required in light of it;”

Substantial deliberation ensued on the merits and demerits of the decisions made.

There had been concerns that it was difficult to make comparisons between the four quotations received because a written specification had not been prepared resulting in too many variables. Consequently, the Council had reached the decisions set out above.

Councillor B Kerr reported that the advice received from the Cheshire Playing Fields Association was to ask each contractor to “design and build” the Golden Jubilee Park and that the contract should be awarded taking into account the various initiatives put forward with an eye on best value. Each proposal and resulting quotation should be considered and a decision made on their merits.

It was also noted that to attract grant aid it was important to have a holistic approach as funders preferred this rather than letting lots of small contracts for the various work needed.

The Clerk reminded the Council that under Standing Order Number 36(a) “a decision (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within six months except by a special resolution, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least four Members of the Council, or be a resolution moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.” If the Council was of a mind to rescind a decision made in the previous month using this Standing Order it could not do so at this meeting as the necessary written notice had not been received. Consequently, to revoke any decisions made at the Special Council meeting held on 26 November 2002 would require a resolution to suspend Standing Orders.

213 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

RESOLVED:

That the Council’s Standing Orders be suspended whilst the quotations submitted for work required to turn the land on Fiddlers Lane into a Golden Jubilee Park are considered and an appropriate way forward agreed.

214 GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK – FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF QUOTATIONS

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Resolutions (2) and (3) of Minute No 208 (Special Council meeting held on 26 November 2002) be rescinded;

- (2) advice be sought from the Cheshire Playing Fields Association's Technical Advisor, Mr Ray Easby, in respect of the quotations received from Michael Cornes Contracts Ltd and Harris to establish if any elements need clarification (the prices to be blanked out at this stage); and
- (3) a further report be made to the next meeting of the Council for final decision on the awarding of the contract.

215 ACCOUNTS

- (a) Payments made since the meeting of the Council held on 4 November 2002:

Financial Year 2002/2003	£	Cheque No
Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council	1,185.35	101556
Marsden Market Supplies	58.75	101557
GJ & A Dutton	58.75	101558
Mrs S Hudspeth (Salary)	414.61	101559
Mrs S Hudspeth (Expenses)	95.44	101560

- (b) Receipts

Interest to 23 November 2002 (Treasurer Account)	0.04
Interest to 21 November 2002 (14 day Interest Account)	69.44
Return of cheque No 101537 for £20 from Chester City Council as two Members attended the training course. (it was to guarantee the two places.)	

- (c) S137 – Saughall Youth Club

RESOLVED:

That no donations be made in respect of the Saughall Youth Club at this time.

216 POLICE/HOMEWATCH

- (a) Police

PC Gareth Cooper was unable to attend the meeting but had sent a written report.

The two new bus shelters on Church Road and the Ridings had been vandalised and the glass smashed. Also there had been a burglary in Crofters Way and the two offenders had been arrested in Rhyl.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

- (b) Homewatch Manager for Chester and Ellesmere Port

The Chairman reported that he had met the new Homewatch Manager appointed by the Cheshire Constabulary. He, along with PC Phil Topless, had accepted an invitation to attend and make a presentation at the Council's Community Safety

Committee meeting scheduled for 7:30pm on 8 January 2003 at the Vernon Institute.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the report be received; and

(2) all members of the Saughall Homewatch be invited to attend the next meeting of the Community Safety Committee.

(c) Homewatch

Mr Bryan Jones reported that the village had been exceptionally quiet. There was no Homewatch Co-ordinator in Crofters Way and 7 out of the 38 Co-ordinators did not wish to continue.

(d) Police Relations

Although Inspector Geoff Williams had chosen not to respond to the letter sent to him by the Clerk on 6 November 2002 the Chairman reported that the Cheshire Constabulary would be more co-operative in the future. The relationship between the Parish Council and the Constabulary would be cemented and the two organisations would move forward in partnership.

(e) Members' Concerns

Councillor Mrs D Whitton reported an incident which had occurred at 9:50am on 11 November 2002. She had flagged down a passing police patrol car and asked it to take action and let her know the outcome. The Police had not reported back.

Fireworks were being set off during the night.

Concerns were raised again over vehicles parking on the pavement in Long Lane and causing an obstruction.

Heavy Goods vehicles were causing an obstruction at the Moorings at the Lodge Lane and Long Lane junction.

(f) Progress Rural Matters

PC Gareth Cooper had reported that police operations would be mounted throughout December 2002 and additional resources would be deployed in all areas of the rural section.

(g) Community Safety Committee

RESOLVED:

That the following items make up the agenda for the next meeting of the Community Safety Committee scheduled for 7:30pm on 8 January 2003:

Introduction of Mr David Owens – new Homewatch Manager
Presentation on the Homewatch Manager's role and responsibilities
CCTV and Extra Lighting in the Village – Advice
Question and Answer Session

217 HIGHWAY MATTERS

(a) No 28 Bus Service

Councillor RA Storrar was not in attendance so no report was made on progress. However, it was noted that the Highways Authority was seeking parking restrictions along one side of Whip Cord Lane.

RESOLVED:

That the position continue to be monitored and a further report be brought to the next meeting of the Council.

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

Options were being considered.

RESOLVED:

That the situation be monitored and options considered be reported to the next meeting of the Council when hopefully County Councillor D Rowlands will be in attendance.

(c) Overgrown Hedges - Hermitage Road to Blacon Boundary

Requests for hedges to be cut back had been made by the Clerk and Councillor Marsden. Two landowners were involved. However, no progress had been made.

(d) Potholes

The pothole, probably caused by development work on Sea Hill Road, was still there.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to bring the pothole to the attention of the District Engineer.

(e) Gas Leaks – The Ridings

It was reported that there had been gas leaks on the footpath by the Ridings. The problem had been rectified.

(f) Highway Schemes and Parish Council Consultations

It was reported that Cheshire County Council had wanted to scrap a number of highway schemes without reference to Parish Councils. Mr Bob Armitage, a

representative of a neighbouring Parish Council, had reminded officers of the Principal Authority that there was a Cheshire Local Council's Charter in place. Councillor B Kerr informed that no schemes already planned for Saughall would be shelved.

(g) Beeches Lane Electricity Transformer

Councillor Mrs JE Storrar reported that overhanging branches in Beeches Lane were affecting the transformer. Consequently, the electricity supply was intermittent at times.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to bring the overhanging branches and their effects to the attention of MANWEB/Scottish Power.

218 ENVIRONMENT MATTERS

(a) Play Area Inspection - Fiddlers Lane Playing Field

It was noted that Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council had informed that the play equipment remained in good order.

Councillor C Moss reported that the goalposts were still in the ditch and it was agreed that he, with the help of Councillor A Marsden, would retrieve and erect them on the field at some stage.

(b) Golden Jubilee Park

It was noted that the next meeting of the Golden Jubilee Park Panel was scheduled for 14 January 2003. It was important that meetings took place with the Cheshire Playing Fields Association Technical Advisor, Mr Ray Easby, prior to the meeting and agreement would need to be sought on who would attend the meetings with Mr Easby (Minute No 214 refers).

(c) Best Kept Village Competition – Awards 26 September 2002

The Clerk reported that the meeting scheduled for 3 December 2002 had been cancelled due to illness. This meeting, signifying the launch of the 2003 competition, would be rescheduled in the New Year.

(d) Litter Bins

RESOLVED:

That this item no longer be a standing item on the Council's agenda but if problems arise they be brought to the attention of the Clerk.

(e) Tree Warden Report

There was nothing to report since the last meeting.

(f) Grassed Amenity Area – Greenway

Councillor B Kerr reported that Chester City Council had erected signage and therefore it looked as though the responsibility rested with the Principal Authority. One of its officers, Mr Phil Davies, was looking into it and the report requested from Councillor RA Storrar would be brought to the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the situation be revisited at the next meeting of the Council.

(g) Passageway - Fieldway

No response had been received to the Clerk's letter of 15 October 2002 to the Chester and District Housing Trust regarding the blocking up of the passageway in Fieldway permanently.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to write again to the Housing Trust on this issue.

219 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS

RESOLVED: That

(1) the Minutes of the meetings of the following Committees and Panel be received:

Planning Committee held on 4 and 20 November 2002
Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 14 November 2002
Parish Plan Steering Group held on 30 October 2002;

(2) the two new bus shelter schemes agreed for next year be taken into consideration when the Council agrees its 2003/2004 budget. (The Parish Council's contribution is £1,000 per scheme plus £250 per shelter, per annum, maintenance costs.); and

(3) the Clerk be requested to arrange a meeting with Miss Rachel Cowan, Parishes Officer, Cheshire Community Council, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to prepare the bid for funding to the Countryside Agency to compile the Parish Plan.

220 FIVE YEAR PLAN OF ACTION 2003-2008

RESOLVED:

That the Five Year Plan Of Action 2003-2008 as revised by the Finance and General Purposes Committee be adopted and placed on the Council's website.

221 PARISH COUNCIL CHARTER WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The Chairman suggested that the Council consider drawing up a Charter to detail how it proposed to deal and work with its electorate (a document along the lines of the Cheshire Local Council's Charter agreed by the Cheshire Association of Town and Parish Councils and Cheshire County Council).

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Parish Council Charter approach be agreed in principle; and
- (2) the Finance and General Purposes Committee be requested to give detailed consideration to drafting a Charter at its meeting and make its recommendations to a future meeting of the Council.

222 FREEDOM ON INFORMATION ACT 2000 – PUBLICATION SCHEMES

RESOLVED:

That this Council adopt the Model scheme and the Clerk be requested to inform the Information Commissioner of this by 31 December 2002.

223 LOCAL COUNCIL'S CHARTER FOR CHESHIRE

The Council considered the draft Local Council's Charter for Cheshire as prepared by the Cheshire Association of Town and Parish Councils which was currently out to consultation.

RESOLVED:

That subject to "any other form of communication including e-mail" being included in paragraph 13 of the document, it be approved and the Cheshire Association of Town and Parish Councils be informed accordingly.

224 NALC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Councillor B Kerr informed that this issue had been overtaken by events and that the Strategy had been approved by NALC's Annual General Meeting. No charge would be made for the next financial year. At the NALC Annual Meeting held in London on 14 October 2002 the Development Fund was only approved as a concept but the proposed collection of monies from member councils over a three year period was removed. The NALC Council would, over the next twelve months, work out how the Fund was to be financed and the monies distributed. This would be done in consultation with County Associations.

RESOLVED:

That the NALC Development Strategy and the report on progress be noted.

225 SAUGHALL YOUTH CLUB

It was noted that three youths had caused some problems recently and had been caught smoking an illegal substance. Male support was required by the Youth Club and Youth Club issues would be brought up by Members at the next meeting of the Community Safety Committee scheduled for 8 January 2003.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be received; and

(2) Saughall Youth Club no longer be a standing item on the Council's agenda.

226 PARISH COUNCIL SURGERIES

RESOLVED:

That the Parish Council's Surgery rota for the next four weeks be as follows:

Date	Member
14 December 2002	Councillor Mrs J Johnson
21 December 2002	Councillor A Bailey
28 December 2002	Councillor B Kerr
4 January 2003	Councillor C Moss

227 COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED

The following communications had been received:

- letter dated 18 November 2002 from Kirsty Shaw, Project Director, Countryside Agency, regarding the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and including provisional map issue for lower North West.

The map must be made available for inspection.

Noted.

228 CIRCULARS

The following circulars had been received. Any Member who wanted sight of any document would contact the Clerk:

Cheshire County Council's Community Waste Action Programme

Cheshire County Council's Statement of Accounts 2001-02

Chester City Council's Ethics and Standards Committee Agenda – 29 November 2002

Chester City Council Economic Development – Chester Complimentary Map

The Countryside Agency – New rights, new responsibilities

The Countryside Agency – Drawing the boundaries

Housing Trust News – November 2002

229 VERNON INSTITUTE

(a) Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Vernon Institute Management Committee held on 8 October 2002 were received.

(b) Methodist Church

The Chairman reported that he had met with Rev Margaret Banks on an informal basis. She had reported that an architect was looking at the scheme and estimated

costs of the proposed new Methodist Hall. A report would be considered by the Methodist Church's Governing Body in January 2003 and it would decide the way forward.

(c) Vernon Institute Management Committee's Annual General Meeting

The Council received a report from those Members who had attended the AGM held on 12 November 2002.

(d) Vernon Institute Roof

The Chairman reported that it had been brought to his attention that there could be a problem with the roof.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to get in touch with the Chairman of the Vernon Institute Management Committee, Mr Brian Huxley, to ascertain the situation and to inform him that if it was necessary the Council will pay for a structural roof survey to determine the exact situation.

(e) Parish Council's Help and Support

RESOLVED: That

(1) until the situation regarding the Vernon Institute's roof is clarified no decision be made on the level of help and support that can be made available to the Vernon Institute Management Committee; and

(2) a further report be brought to the next meeting of the Council.

Councillor C Moss left the meeting

230 PARISH ROOM

The Council considered the revised recommendations of the Finance and General Purposes Committee to keep the Parish Room at a reduced rent of £1,250 per annum from 1 April 2003, subject to acceptable modification and improvement to the access, for a further year with a review in November/December 2003. (Minute No 62/2002 of the Finance and General Purposes Committee refers.)

RESOLVED: That

(1) the recommendations of the Finance and General Purposes Committee be agreed;

(2) Mr C Moss, the landlord, be informed accordingly; and

(3) Councillor B Kerr discuss with Mr C Moss the possibility of applying for a reduction in the rating assessment of the property.