

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK PANEL held on 3 October 2002 in the Parish Room, 2 Fiddlers Lane, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor A Bailey (in the Chair)
Councillor B Kerr
Councillor C Moss
Councillor R Shukla

Co-opted Members: Mr KA Evans representing Saughall Colts Football Team
Mr M Bell representing Saughall Youth Club
Mrs J Young representing Saughall Uniform Groups

35 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs D Bell and B Huxley and from Councillors A Marsden and Mrs D Whitton.

36 CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were received.

37 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Golden Jubilee Park Panel held on 24 July 2002 be confirmed as a correct record.

38 MATTERS ARISING

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

39 GRANT APPLICATIONS

(a) Rural Children's Playgrounds and Recreation Areas

Councillor RA Storrar reported that the allocation of grant was still under consideration by Chester City Council.

(b) Community Facilities Grant

Councillor RA Storrar reported that the allocation of grant was still under consideration by Chester City Council.

(c) Local Panel North

Chester City Council had agreed to financial aid of £3,200 but it was conditional on work being done and invoices being received before the end of the current financial year.

40 SITE INSPECTION

(a) Landform

Following a recent site visit, Landform (UK) Ltd had submitted a detailed quotation in respect of the development of the land on Fiddlers Lane.

The Chairman shared the scope of the work required with the Panel. Costs would be considered by the Council once all quotations requested were received.

(b) Michael Corns

Councillors Kerr, Moss and RA Storrar had taken part in a site visit with contractor Michael Corns. They shared the detail with the Panel. Quotations were awaited in respect of the work required.

(c) Other Quotations

The Chairman reported that he had invited Mr G Bubb, a resident of Saughall and a Conceptual Architect, to attend the meeting to offer ideas. Unfortunately, Mr Bubb was not in attendance.

It was necessary to obtain at least three quotations for consideration before the Council awarded the contract for the work required to develop the site.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to make the necessary arrangements for representatives of WE Parsons of Ellesmere Port and Harris of Nantwich to undertake site visits with Members with a view to providing quotations for the work required.

(d) Drainage

The District Engineer had attended a site visit with Councillor Kerr to consider and discuss the drainage as it left the Council's land. The District Engineer was not able to lift the inspection cover but was confident that the storm water drain would be able to cope. Any problems that arose once the drainage work had been completed would be the responsibility of the Highways Authority.

(e) Weeds

Landform had advised the Council to spray the field to keep the weeds down. Councillor A Marsden had made arrangements for the field to be sprayed at cost of £100. It would be sprayed again in the Spring.

Councillor RA Storrar told the Panel that the work had been unnecessary at this time and a waste of money. However, the action had been taken on receipt of professional advice.

41 RE-DESIGNATION OF LAND FOR RECREATIONAL USE
HEDGEROW – PLANNING PERMISSION

At the last meeting of the Panel, Chester City Council's Forward Planning Manager, Mr Charles Seward, had agreed to get advice on the hedgerow which separated the newly acquired land from the swing park and playing field already in the Council's ownership and would report back to the Council. It would be necessary to take the hedge and some of the trees out to accommodate the layout of sports pitches planned.

It had been considered that the best approach was to package the hedge removal in with the rest of the scheme. As there were time limits on the work because of the conditions on which the grant aid had been secured the Panel considered the best approach to take.

Ms Rosie Vernon, a Planning Officer at Chester City Council, who had also attended the last meeting had been in touch with the Clerk regarding the hedge and trees. She had informed that from a planning perspective, their removal would be undesirable both from a landscape/visual and a nature conservation perspective. If there was any way of providing the desired pitches and facilities whilst retaining the hedge then this would be the preferred solution and would help to prevent delays in the planning process.

A planning application for the change of use of the land from agricultural to recreational land would be required. Obviously the sooner the application was submitted, the quicker it could be determined. The treatment of the hedge would be considered as part of the application, together with all the other relevant issues. However, if the Council wished to proceed with the hedge removal in advance of a planning application, then a separate Hedgerow Regulations application would be required.

If the hedge was to be removed, it may be necessary to undertake a nature conservation survey to identify if any Great Crested Newts were present. If there were newts, then the removal of the hedge could result in a loss of habitat and a possible contravention of the law. Due to hibernation, such a survey would need to be carried out next Spring. This course of action would clearly cause difficulties in meeting the timescales for the grant aid. If the hedge was to be retained, however, then it was unlikely that a survey would be required.

Ms Vernon recommended that prior to submitting a planning application the Council should contact Mr Dave Roberts in the Highway Department at Cheshire County Council to discuss access issues and the Countryside Officer, Mr Mike O'Kell, to discuss issues about landscape and wildlife features such as the hedge, trees, ditches, pond, etc. She also informed that if it was necessary to remove the hedge, it would be helpful to include a supporting statement with the application, setting out the reasons for this.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Councillor RA Storrar be requested to get in touch with the Council's former Pond Warden, Mr Mark Robinson, to see if he has any knowledge of Great Crested Newts;

(2) the Council be **RECOMMENDED** to make an application for change of use from agricultural land to recreational land and to include the hedgerow in the detail; and

(3) the Clerk be requested to get in touch with Ms Vernon to arrange for the necessary documentation to be sent immediately in respect of (2) above.

42 ELECTRICITY CABLES

The Panel noted the content of correspondence from MANWEB and were informed of the proceedings of a site visit undertaken by Councillor B Kerr and Mr Edwin Davies, MANWEB's Wayleave Officer.

Members were informed that MANWEB would put the cables across the field underground. Mr Davies would discuss an appropriate route with the Engineer. On receipt of a request to realign cables etc. MANWEB must act within a three month period. It had written to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry. This was a formal procedure to protect its legal position.

It was important that the burial of the cables should be co-ordinated with the drainage work required.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and any progress made be reported to the next meeting of the Panel.

43 UNIFORM GROUP HEADQUARTERS

The application had been made by the Council for permanent planning permission for the Uniform Group Headquarters with less restrictions. Five copies of the plan for the area had been required. Planning Officers had now provided these and the Chairman had marked them up as requested.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the report be received; and

(2) Councillor RA Storrar be requested to hand deliver the copies of the Plan to the appropriate Planning Officer in an attempt to speed up the process.

44 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Members received a copy of the funding briefs prepared by Ms Sandra Morrison, External Funding Officer at Chester City Council.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the funding briefs be noted and the documentation be kept safely for future discussion and use.

45 NEXT STEPS AND FUTURE ACTIONS

RESOLVED:

That the next steps and future actions be as follows:

- (1) obtain all four quotations for funding (firms to supply within 28 days of undertaking a site visit).
- (2) a planning application to be made for change of use (Professional advice to be sought from Cheshire County Council Officers (Minute No 41/2002 refers)).
- (3) bids for grant aid to be worked up with help from local residents with experience and expertise in this field. (Councillor RA Storrar to provide names.)
- (4) a Business Plan to be put together (to assist (3) above).
- (5) as planning permission has been obtained, a 12 foot gate to be provided and erected to provide access for Mr & Mrs Johnson to their land. (Discussions to be held over the type of posts needed and the Area Engineer's advice to be sort on possible positioning of the gate.)
- (6) regular informal meetings of this Panel to be held (every 2-3 weeks) to ensure progress and to keep things ticking along.

46 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the date and time of the next meeting of the Panel be determined by the Council at its meeting scheduled for 14 October 2002.