

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK PANEL held on 8 May 2003 in the Parish Room, 2 Fiddlers Lane, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor A Bailey (in the Chair)
Councillor B Kerr
Councillor A Marsden
Councillor C Moss
Councillor Mr RA Storrar
Councillor Mrs D Whitton
Councillor Mrs J Young

Co-opted Members: Mr KA Evans representing Saughall Colts
Mr D Bird

Invited Guest: Mr G Southey
Mr R Easby, Technical Advisor, Cheshire County Playing Fields Association

25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

Mr B Huxley

26 CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Kerr declared an Interest in any issue that arose concerning the Cheshire Community Council as he was the Chairman.

27 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 27 March 2003 be confirmed as a correct record.

28 PARISH PLAN

The Parish Council had stated its intention to draw up a Parish Plan. It had submitted a successful bid to the Countryside Agency for £5,000 to finance the project.

Parish Plans were part of the “Quality” Parish Council initiative on which a consultation paper had been issued by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in November 2001 and which had now been formally promulgated.

The Government wanted local communities to take more control of their own lives, to say what they want doing in their own neighbourhoods and to engage with others to get it done. The Parish Plan process provided an opportunity for villagers to make themselves heard and set out what they would like to see being provided for them in the village.

The Parish Council intended to consult widely and if the local community came up with clear evidence of need and suggested projects to alleviate certain problems or enhance what was already in the pipeline, the Parish Plan would help make the case to a range of funding bodies for cash for such projects.

The Chairman reported that as part of the Parish Plan process a number of Focus Groups made up of interested members of the community (including Parish Councillors) were proposed to look at key issues. As the provision of recreational and leisure facilities was a major project in Saughall at the current time it was expected that a Focus Group would succeed this Panel in the new Municipal Year. The Group would inform the Plan and identify any problems, develop the Golden Jubilee Park and lobby as appropriate to improve quality of life and provide recreational and leisure options for local people. It was also expected to retain the current Panel's remit.

As part of the consultation process the Chairman was attending meetings of the various interest groups in the village to find out at first hand people's opinions of what should be included within Saughall's Plan.

There was no obligation to produce a Parish Plan, but there would perhaps be political pressure to do so. The Government, the Countryside Agency and others would want to see that Parish Councils could justify the added responsibilities which they were being invited to take up.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

- 29 APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION
- RE-DESIGNATION OF LAND FOR RECREATIONAL USE
- REMOVAL OF HEDGEROW

(a) Ecological Assessment and Survey of Great Crested Newts

The Council had commissioned Dr Brian P Hodgson of Aquatic Management Services to undertake a survey to establish the position with regard to the aquatic habitat on the field acquired for development of sporting facilities. Of particular interest was the drainage ditch that bisected the landholding and how it related to other drainage channels and pools on the land. It was also necessary to determine whether there were any Great Crested Newts and if so what steps would be taken to protect them.

The survey had been carried out at a cost of £500 and its subsequent findings were as follows:

- ?? The physical and chemical quality of Saughall pool is presently in a neglected and poor state.
- ?? Great Crested Newts have been found to be present in Saughall pool.
- ?? An initial netting survey of Saughall pool revealed that no fish were probably present.
- ?? It is strongly believed that the cluster of ponds, both within the surveyed area and on adjoining land, provides an established metapopulation of Great Crested Newts.

- ?? The identified cluster of ponds is connected by a system of deep cut drainage channels. There are considered important linkages for newts between the two garden ponds at the lower end of the system and the collection of ponds in adjoining farmland at the upper end. To the south of the garden ponds the drainage ditch is less important, in fact, it would be wise to discourage movement of newts in this direction as they could be lost down road drains. There will be no detriment in piping a section of this drainage channel to allow the wider use of the fields for recreational circumstances.
- ?? It would be advantageous to raise bed levels of the ditch in the vicinity of the new piped section so as to retain a wetted area within the ditch upstream.
- ?? It would be worthwhile constructing an additional pond in the corner of the field between the garden ponds and Saughall pool. This will help strengthen the habitat for the newt populations within the area.
- ?? Between this pond and Saughall pool, a strip of land approximately 15 meters wide, running parallel to the existing boundary line, should be fenced off.
- ?? Owners of the two small pools in nearby gardens should, by agreement, be guided and given positive assistance if requested, in order to enhance the habitat of the newt metapopulation of this locality.
- ?? Both the Local Authority (Conservation Department) and English Nature/Countryside Council for Wales should be approached to discuss the different elements of this report so that they can be encouraged to become actively involved with the programme.
- ?? An educational package should be developed to involve local schools in the structure and implementation of the work being undertaken.

The pond required dredging and Dr Hodgson had informed that there were grants available to carry out some of the work required to establish and encourage a metapopulation of Great Crested Newts. The survey had been very thorough and covered a whole range of environmental issues.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the findings of the Ecological Assessment and Survey of Great Crested Newts be noted;
- (2) the Environmental Assessment Report be submitted to the Planning Authority along with the planning application as soon as possible; and
- (3) the survey results be revisited at a later stage in the Golden Jubilee Park's development.

(b) Piping the Ditch

The Clerk had written, on the advice of Chester City Council's Planning Officers, to Mr Mark Chadwick, Planning Liaison Team Leader at the Environment Agency, to ask if he would undertake a site visit to see at first hand the ditch between the two parcels of land and give an opinion on whether an exception could be made to allow the ditch to be culverted.

Mr Chadwick had responded to the Clerk informing that surface water from the proposed development would be required to be restricted to the existing 'green field' rate, with source control measures employed to deal with any outstanding

volumes. He invited the Council to contact the Agency's Flood Defence Officer, Mr Graham Todd, at the Buckley Office to discuss the matter further.

RESOLVED:

That Mr Easby be requested to get in touch with Mr Todd and liaise with the Chairman over the outcome before the planning application was completed.

(c) Completion of Planning Application

The Panel considered the layout of the site and the drawings that would be provided for the planning authority. It considered provision already detailed and aspirations for the future. Members amended and added to the layout as appropriate, including the following provision:

- ?? Bowling green – phase 2
- ?? Environmental area – phase 2
- ?? Area for future activities (with youth in mind)

RESOLVED:

That the Chairman be requested to submit the planning application as soon as possible, subject to obtaining a positive response from the Environment Agency ((b) above refers).

30 GRANT AID OPPORTUNITIES

The Panel revisited grant aid opportunities in respect of the recreational development.

(a) Chester City Council's Goway North Area Committee

The Clerk had informed Ms Anne Lancaster, Chester City Council's Area Committee Manager, that it was the Council's intention to apply for grant aid from the Area Committee to assist the development. Processes for applying for the funding available had not yet been finalised but a marker had been put down that the Council wished to compete for the funding available.

(b) Chester District Football Association

Councillor C Moss reported that he had spoken to Mr Ian Speed, Secretary to the Chester District Football Association, outlining the Council's intentions and that as a consequence, the scheme would be put forward to compete for grant aid.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Clerk be requested to write to Mr Speed outlining the proposed development and including a copy of the drawings for his information; and
- (2) Mr Keith Evans be requested to supply relevant information about the Saughall Colts to assist the funding application.

(c) Saughall Colts

Mr Keith Evans informed that there were various funding opportunities available to the Colts. He was exploring the various options and sending for information on how to make bids etc.

The Football Association had two grant schemes, small grants could be accessed for ancillary equipment whilst major projects could be funded from its Larger Grant Scheme. When applying for funding it would be appropriate to show that the proposed facilities would be available to a whole range of groups and it was suggested that any application made should explore the possibility of establishing a ladies football team.

(d) WREN

No application could be made to WREN for funding until the tendering process was complete.

(e) Chester City Council's:

Community Safety and Rural Children's Playground and Recreational Area Grants

Councillor RA Storrar reported that he thought that the funding available had now been incorporated into the Area Committee funding scheme.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor RA Storrar be requested to check with Mr Clive Roberts whether either of the two grants schemes were still in existence or whether they were now part of the Area Committee Grants System.

(f) Northwest Development Agency – Cheshire Rural Recovery Programme

Councillor B Kerr reported that in November 2002 a £9.4 million rural recovery package was announced for Cheshire. The funding provided by the Northwest Development Agency recognised the need for assistance to Cheshire's rural areas. The Programme intended to revitalise and reshape Cheshire's rural economy, rural communities and market towns.

Expressions of interest were now being called for from individuals, businesses, voluntary and community groups and Government agencies to access this funding.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to ask Ms Nicola Lavin, the Programme Manager at Cheshire County Council, for an "Expression of Interest" form.

(g) Other Grant Aid Opportunities

Members advised that they had seen an article on grants available in a recent Cheshire Association of Town and Parish Councils publication.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor B Kerr be requested to provide a copy of the article so that any further opportunities to access funding could be explored.

31 CRICKET SQUARE – MOTTY TEST RESULTS

Councillor B Kerr informed that he had been in touch with Mr Brian Huxley regarding the motty test results. In turn Mr Huxley had contacted Ms Emma Beggs of STRI seeking clarification on the results. Following their conversation, Mr Huxley had confirmed to Councillor Kerr that the Cricket Club was happy with the cricket square specification and to go ahead as Ms Beggs had recommended.

32 THE TENDERING PROCESS

Councillors B Kerr and C Moss and Mr Derek Bird had attended a meeting in Macclesfield with Mr Ray Easby. Mr Easby had produced draft documentation in respect of the invitation to tender including the tender specification. At the meeting amendments had been made and Mr Easby had been invited to incorporate basketball provision into the layout. The cost of the work carried out by Mr Easby amounted to £63.

Mr Easby reported that it was appropriate to inform the original four tenderers that the 'Design and Build' option had been abandoned. This was because funding providers required all tenders to be to the same specification.

As work could not begin until grant aid was secured the successful tenderer would hold his price for a 26 week period.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Council be **RECOMMENDED** to approve the tender documentation and layout at its next meeting;
- (2) the original four tenderers be invited to tender again to the new specification;
- (3) the Clerk be requested to ask Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council if it would like to tender for the development work;
- (4) the Clerk and Councillor B Kerr be requested to compile the necessary letters to accompany the tender documentation; and
- (5) the deadline for the receipt of tenders be 6 weeks after the specification documentation is distributed.

33 MOLES

There was still mole activity in the Swing Park.

RESOLVED:

That the situation regarding moles be monitored.

34 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the next meeting of the Panel (Focus Group) be at 7:30pm on Tuesday, 22 July 2003 in the Parish Room, 2 Fiddlers Lane, Saughall.