

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH  
COUNCIL held on 5 December 2005 at the Vernon Institute, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor WI Humphrey  
Councillor Mrs J Johnson  
Councillor B Kerr (in the Chair)  
Councillor R Shukla  
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar  
Councillor RA Storrar  
Councillor Mrs H Thorniley-Jones  
Councillor A Warrington  
Councillor Mrs M Wynne-Eyton  
Councillor Mrs J Young

County Councillor D Rowlands

211 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

Councillor Mrs P Humphrey  
Councillor C Moss  
Councillor Mrs D Whitton  
Councillor C Wynne-Eyton (Tree Warden)

212 CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were received.

213 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the following amendments, the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 7 November 2005 be confirmed as a correct record:

Minute No 206(b) - Chester City Council's Parish Partnership Event

Add h to Paris in the heading to make Parish

Councillor R Shukla attended, although Councillor RA Storrar was there in his capacity of City Councillor and not as a representative of the Parish Council.

Minute No 210 – Clerk's Contract of Employment

The word "advise" in resolution (4) to read "advice".

214 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute No 193 – Review of Parish Plan

(e) Creation of Additional Parish Activities – Community Facilities – Village Directory

The issue had not been discussed at the last meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee because of the length of the agenda. It would be discussed at the next meeting of the Committee.

(h) Provision of Additional Affordable Housing

The Clerk reported that Mr Steve Eaves, Asset and Regeneration Manager at the Chester and District Housing Trust had informed that the former garage site on Church Road had been identified as a suitable site for affordable housing and the Trust was looking at the possibility of schemes for the site. Ideas were at a very early stage and no decisions had been made as to the mix or type of tenure. The major hurdle for the Trust would be securing funding to make any development project viable so it may take a number of years before any project was even able to come to fruition. When details were available, the Clerk would be told and this was likely to be well into next year.

Consequently, the Trust would not be able to designate the site for use as a car park but parking there in the meantime would not be seen as a problem.

Minute No 202 – Highway Issues

(d) Parking on Church Road

This matter would be raised at the meeting to be held between Inspector R Woodward and representatives of the Council.

Minute No 204 – Odd Jobs

The Chairman reported that the proposal to locate the community seat beside the Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School had the approval of Mr Graham Anderton, the District Engineer, but he wanted to discuss it with representatives of the School's Governing Body and obtain views.

215 PARISH PATHS

RESOLVED:

That as the Parish Footpath Warden, Mr Tony Leach, had been unable to attend the meeting, the item be deferred until the next meeting of the Council when he has indicated that he will be in attendance.

(a) WREN Bid

The Clerk reported that WREN's Northern Area manager, Mr Simon Settle, had written to her on 22 November 2005 to inform that the WREN Management Team had assessed the Council's Application Amendment Form but had referred it to the Cheshire Advisory Panel as it felt that the changes proposed actually changed the dynamics of the original project to which funding had been committed.

The Cheshire Advisory Panel had reviewed the Application Amendment Form at its meeting and had decided to withdraw the offer of funding to the Golden Jubilee Park Project. This decision had been based on the fact that the project had changed from the one that it had originally assessed and that the deadline set by Mr Richard Smith, WREN's Project Manager, in his letter of 9 August 2005 had passed and the Contract had still not been issued.

The grant of £25,000 would be written back into the Cheshire budget to be spent on other eligible projects.

The Council could reapply for a grant for the revised project and the Cheshire Advisory Panel was comfortable with this.

Members agreed that a decision would need to be made as soon as possible on the way forward with this project because of the budgetary implications.

(b) Further Quotations

The Chairman reported that Mr DJ Francis had not yet provided the quotations in respect of the following:

- ? Provide and erect fencing in front of No 2 gate
- ? Tarmac section of the pathway to permit vehicles and equipment onto central area
- ? Extend pathway from front of Uniform Group Headquarters to connect with the perimeter path

A meeting had been arranged between the Chairman and Mr Francis for the following week and this would be discussed then. A decision must be made on whether to go ahead with the full drainage system or on whether to modify it. Also, funding of any work agreed needed to be discussed, including the possibility of a loan from the Public Works Loans Board.

It was noted that the ditch could not currently cope with the level of rainfall experienced recently and was pouring onto the road.

The area behind the Uniform Headquarters had been identified as a possible site for a basketball court. The Chairman agreed to ask Mr Francis to provide a quotation or an indicative cost for the work necessary to install a basketball court.

(c) Diversion of Electrical Cables

The Clerk had written to Mr Edwin Davies, the Wayleave Officer, of SP Powersystems Ltd thanking him for the plan of the revised underground cable route. She had also confirmed the consent of the Council to the amended cable route using a moling system provided markers were put in place to indicate the route.

The consent of the adjoining landowner was still required to route the cables across his land and Mr Davies would pursue this.

The Council expected the work to be carried out this Winter so that its own contractor could be on-site in the Spring and Mr Davies had been made aware of this.

If the Clerk had not heard anything during the next month on progress made she would write again to Mr Davies requesting a report on developments.

(d) Weed Spraying

It was noted that the weeds needed to be sprayed.

(e) Pond

It was noted that the fence posts had been pulled up and thrown into the stagnant pond.

(f) Annual Inspection of Playgrounds

This report would be considered at the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Golden Jubilee Park Project be a substantive item on the agenda for the next meeting of the Council scheduled for 9 January 2006;
- (2) the Project Co-ordinator, Mr Derek Bird, be requested to attend the next Council meeting; and
- (3) items on the agenda for the next meeting be kept to a minimum and transferred, if need be, to the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee to allow enough time to discuss the Golden Jubilee Park Project in detail.

217 PLAY FACILITY POLICY AND STRATEGY: CONSULTATION BY CHESTER CITY COUNCIL

The Draft Strategy was the subject of consultation until 13 January 2006 when comments must be received.

The Council spent some time on the documents providing answers to the questions listed.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to submit the Council's response to the Draft Strategy by 13 January 2006.

218 POLICE/HOMEWATCH

(a) Crime and Disorder

Members reported that the door to the Drop-In had been kicked in by youths; the Church Road bus shelter area and the rest of the village had been relatively quiet of late and that a refuse collection vehicle had been responsible for mounting the kerb and breaking the manhole cover in Greenway, opposite No 16. It had been very dangerous as there had been an open 5 feet drop. The manhole had now been repaired.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to inform the District Engineer, Mr Graham Anderton, who was responsible for the broken manhole cover and bring it to the attention of the Contractor's management.

(b) Homewatch

Mr Keith Stinson of the Saughall Homewatch informed, by e-mail, that his organisation was continuing to try to find Co-ordinators to fill the gaps. The object was to have them by 15 February 2006. The intention was to re-launch the Homewatch with individual Co-ordinators taking responsibility for their patches. Any gaps remaining would not be covered by Homewatch.

A Sub-Committee would be responsible for the re-launch by writing and delivering introductory notes to the Co-ordinators, liaison with the Parish Council and producing copy for the next Parish Council newsletter.

From 15 February 2006 Mr Stinson and the Sub-Committee would cease to have overall responsibility. There would still be a need for some overall co-ordination and Mr Stinson presumed that this would become a responsibility of the Parish Council unless a Co-ordinator or Co-ordinators could be found. Surplus cash in the Homewatch's bank account would be returned to the Parish Council together with audited accounts.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be received; and
- (2) Mr Stinson be invited to attend the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee to discuss proposals and any help needed from the Council.

(c) Meeting with Inspector Woodward

The Chairmen reported that Inspector Woodward had agreed to attend a meeting with representatives of the Council in the Parish Room at 2:00pm on Thursday, 8 December 2005. The Sergeant responsible for Saughall would also attend this meeting.

RESOLVED:

That as many Members as possible who are available be requested to attend the meeting with the Police Inspector.

(d) Low-Level Anti-Social Behaviour around Wain House

Chester City Council's Area Manager, Ms Anne Lancaster, had informed the Clerk that a proposal had been put forward by local residents to gate the alleyway leading to the unused land where children/young people played football, with keys only for residents who need access.

Ms Lancaster had instigated a number of visits by the Community Safety Warden who had made a number of recommendations for alleviating the problem but did not suggest alley-gating.

Christine Russell MP had written to Ms Lancaster on 11 October 2005 informing that she had received a letter and petition from residents who lived in Wain House and the surrounding area about the low-level anti-social behaviour by young people on the land to the rear of Wain House. Problems ranged from litter, plants destroyed, youths looking inside the bungalows and pulling fences, graffiti, 'mooning', late night noise, licking footballs against the fence, urinating in the alleyway, etc. The residents preferred option was to gate off the two alleyway ends with keys only for those who needed to use it and that an approach be made to the Area Committee for funding to facilitate these measures.

Members discussed the proposal in detail and agreed that alley-gating would not prevent access to the area in question and such a scheme would prove to be an expensive partial solution.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to inform Ms Lancaster that this Council does not support the proposal because it will not work and because the real solution is the employment of Community Wardens and effective policing.

(e) Police Service Restructuring

The Council considered a letter sent jointly by the Clerk and Chief Executive to the Police Authority and the Chief Constable informing of the Home Secretary's decision in respect of their first submission of four options for the restructuring of policing in Cheshire and the North West.

The Home Secretary had asked the Police Authorities in the North West to further develop only two options:

- ? Two forces – Cheshire/Greater Manchester Police  
Lancashire/Merseyside/Cumbria
- ? Three forces – Cheshire/Merseyside  
Lancashire/Cumbria  
Greater Manchester to stay as it is

It was considered that the most likely option for Cheshire was a merger with Merseyside.

They were very disappointed with this outcome and preferred a regional force, which may be the outcome in other parts of the country, although there was little support for this in the North West. They now had to develop a fully costed business case with further submissions to the Home Secretary by 30 November and 23 December 2005.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the letter be noted.

## 219 CONSULTATION ON THE PROVISION OF A YOUTH POD

RESOLVED:

That this matter be taken off the agenda until the Spring when light nights will afford the opportunity to consult with the young people of the village.

## 220 ACCOUNTS

(a) Payments made since the meeting of the Council held on 7 November 2005:

Financial Year 2005/2006	£	Cheque No
Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council (Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleaning)	1,049.67	101835
Mr B Kerr (Chairman's 6 monthly allowance)	500.00	101836
NALC (Conference Fees)	272.88	101837
Mrs S Hudspeth (Exp)	80.91	101838
Mrs J Young (Car mileage to Middlewich and return on 13 October 2005)	27.27	101839
Mrs S Hudspeth (Sal)	572.12	101840
* Mrs M Abram (Honorarium – Library work)	75.00	101841
* Mr W Abram (Honorarium – Clock winding)	25.00	101842
* Saughall Friday Club (Contribution towards Christmas Lunch)	25.00	101843

\* (c) below refers

(b) Receipts

Interest to 21 November 2005 (14 Day Account)	55.79
Interest to 23 November 2005 (Treasurer Account)	0.40
Chester City Council Grant (Disability Action Playground Budget – Perimeter Path)	600.00

(c) Gratuities

RESOLVED:

That the following payments be made:

- ? Mrs M Abram - £75.00 to be shared with the ladies who help in the library
- ? Mr W Abram - £25.00 for winding the Vernon Institute Clock
- ? The Friday Club - £25.00 towards the cost of the Christmas Lunch

(d) Bank Mandate and Business telephone Banking

The Clerk reported that HSBC Bank had informed that it had not received the new bank mandate sent recently and that there was no alternative but to complete the necessary paperwork again.

The Clerk was unable to transfer funds from the 14 Day Interest Account to the Treasurer Account by telephone because tighter controls meant she could no longer get through the security measures in place. An application for Business Telephone Banking would remedy the problem.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the new HSBC Bank plc mandate be signed and submitted to the bank as soon as possible;
- (2) the Bank Accounts be continued with HSBC Bank plc and the Bank be authorised to pay all cheques and instructions for payment signed on behalf of the Council by the Clerk and two other Members from the following list: Councillors B Kerr, A Warrington, RA Storrar, Mrs D Whitton and Mrs J Young;
- (3) each cheque must be signed (as (2) above) by 3 who have provided specimen signatures; and
- (4) the Clerk be requested to submit the application for Business Telephone Banking to HSBC Bank plc as soon as possible.

221 PARISH COUNCIL SURGERIES

It was reported that, again, no-one had attended the Parish Council Surgery held on 3 December 2005. It was agreed that it would be necessary to discuss, at a future meeting, whether the present arrangements were meeting a need and consider whether alternative venues to the Parish Room may be the solution.

RESOLVED:

That Councillors RA Storrar and Mrs H Thorniley-Jones be requested to preside over the next Parish Council Surgery scheduled for Saturday, 7 January 2006 between 10:00am and 10:45am in the Parish Room, 2 Fiddlers Lane, Saughall.

222 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the following Committees be received and the recommendation of the Council's approach to training as recommended in the Finance and General Purposes Committee Minutes (Minute No 26/2005 refers) be agreed:

Planning Committee held on 7 November 2005

Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 17 November 2005

223 HIGHWAY ISSUES

(a) Parked Cars on Pavements

RESOLVED:

That this issue be raised with Inspector R Woodward at the meeting scheduled for the following Thursday.

(b) Bus Shelters

Cheshire County Council's Transport Co-ordination Section had obtained the necessary support from its Environment Strategic Panel and the Executive and were able to proceed with the implementation of the CCTV Pilot Scheme in the New Year. The Clerk had received confirmation that the Section would be very happy to liaise with the Parish Council, by supplying further details of the scheme, including methods of monitoring (which it was proposed would be carried out by the CCTV supplier), incident reporting, evaluating and future developments.

The new shelter on Hermitage Road/Meadows Lane (CH1430) had now been installed and was awaiting electrical connection. An invoice in respect of the contribution towards this shelter (and continued maintenance of previous parish scheme shelters) would be received in due course.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

(c) Winter Gritting Routes

Copies of the routes were circulated to those Members requesting them.

(d) Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO)

A540 Parkgate Road, Saughall: A5117 to Long Lane

Cheshire County Council's Area Maintenance Engineer, Mr Chris Garner, had written to the Clerk on 30 November 2005 informing that the Highway Authority wished to carry out the following roadworks on the above road:

- ? Drainage repairs
- ? Carriageway repairs

The works necessitated the following temporary traffic regulation:

Temporary road closure to be applied, commencing on Saturday, 21 January 2006 for a period of approximately 3 weeks, although the Order would last for 18 months, or **until the work was completed**. The closure will be removed outside the working day i.e. 08:00-17:00 weekends or 09:30-16:30 weekdays.

The proposal would be discussed with the Police and other interested parties to consider their views. Any comments or objections or requests to be involved in any further discussions on this matter were required to be submitted by 16 December 2005.

Members agreed that this TTRO would cause considerable inconvenience. Therefore, appropriate signage would need to be put in place and this was discussed in detail and would be reported back to the Area Maintenance Engineer.

RESOLVED:

That this matter be further considered at the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

#### 224 CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES

The Council received a report on the recent Christmas festivities in the village that had gone very well. To coincide with the switching on of the Christmas lights, there had been a Craft Fayre in the Vernon Institute, the Salvation Army Band had played and the Schools had been there. Unfortunately, despite the arrangements made the Chester Chronicle had not turned up to take photographs.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

#### 225 ODD JOBS

RESOLVED:

That this item be deferred to a future meeting of the Council.

#### 226 VERNON INSTITUTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

It was noted that plans had been submitted by the Vernon Institute Management Committee in respect of a Children's play area.

#### 227 ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

(a) Parochial Church Council (PCC) on 17 November 2005

The Chairman reported on the proceedings of the meeting that he had attended to represent the Council.

Burial land had been under discussion and the Vicar had informed that it would run out in Saughall in the next 2 to 3 years. It had been agreed that the land at the back of Park Avenue, currently in the ownership of Cheshire County Council, was the best option for burial land. Also, the PCC was not adverse to the “willow beds” being used for parking as a “trade off” if the Parish Council was able to purchase the County Council owned land for burial purposes.

Disposal of any Church land could only be agreed with the consent of the Diocese of Chester.

It had been agreed that the PCC and the Parish Council would write jointly to Chester City Council requesting that it meet the costs of new burial land in Saughall.

(b) Goway North Area Committee on 1 December 2005

The Chairman and Councillor A Warrington had attended the Area Committee meeting. Issues discussed had included Double Rating and the City Council’s cash payment facilities being provided at post offices in the Chester District.

The City Council had agreed, last year, to start to reduce the extra financial burden on people living in parished areas. Consequently, it had made a grant of 50 pence per head to parishes in April 2005. It had also been understood that this figure would be gradually increased, in future years, until the contributions made by each person in the parished areas (approximately £3.70) was returned.

However, rumour had it that the Double Taxation Grant for 2006/07 would be the same as this year plus a small allowance for inflation.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the report be received; and

(2) the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, draft and send a lobbying the City Council not to renege on its promise and honour its undertaking to continue to reduce the Double Taxation burden by increasing the grant available for this purpose.

228 CIRCULARS

The following circulars had been received, anyone wishing a copy would contact the Clerk:

Cheshire County Council – The MJ

Cheshire County Council – Cheshire Matters – November 2005

Cheshire County Council – Rights of Way Improvement Plan  
(Comments are invited by 23 January 2006)

The Daily News

Cheshire County Council’s Consultation on Cheshire Waste Local Plan (Re-Deposit)  
(Comments are requested by 21 December 2005)

Highways Agency – Non-Technical Summary of the Environmental Statement –  
A5117 Deeside Park Junctions Improvement