

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH COUNCIL held on 6 February 2006 at the Vernon Institute, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor Mrs P Humphrey
Councillor WI Humphrey
Councillor B Kerr (in the Chair)
Councillor R Shukla
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar
Councillor RA Storrar
Councillor A Warrington
Councillor Mrs D Whitton
Councillor C Wynne-Eyton (Tree Warden)
Councillor Mrs M Wynne-Eyton
Councillor Mrs J Young

Mr B Huxley, Saughall Cricket Club
Ms J Cooper, Cheshire Community Council

25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor Mrs J Johnson
Councillor C Moss

26 CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were received.

27 SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK'S PARISH PLAN
- LOCAL CONTEXT TESTING

The Chairman reported that Government Office North West (GONW) had selected the Parish of Saughall and Shotwick Park to test connection between the Regional Delivery Framework priorities and community aspirations. GONW had appointed a consultant, Mr Rob Hindle, to undertake the work and he had asked the Cheshire Community Council to help him deliver. Ms Julia Cooper would take charge of the project.

Ms Cooper had extensive knowledge and wide experience of Parish Council matters and community level planning and would endeavour to work with the community to get the most out of the project and demonstrate Cheshire's capability.

Ms Cooper was in attendance at the meeting at the Chairman's invitation. She introduced herself and made a short presentation on the work she would be undertaking.

A meeting would be held with the Parish Council on either 20 or 22 February 2006 and a member of the North-West Rural Affairs Forum, the Rt Rev Alan Chesters, had indicated a willingness to come and talk to the Council at the meeting. The project was seen as a very important phase in the collection of evidence for determining rural

priorities and the North-West Rural Affairs Forum was keen to emphasise this point and support local work.

Ms Cooper informed that the outcomes of the Parish Plan would be rigorously tested against the six Regional Rule Delivery Framework (RRDF) priorities:

- ? Maximising the economic potential of the region's rural area
- ? Supporting sustainable farming and food
- ? Improving access to affordable rural housing
- ? Ensuring fair access to services for rural communities
- ? Empowering rural communities and addressing rural social exclusion
- ? Enhancing the value of our rural environmental inheritance

The North West RRDF was founded on achieving a vision of :

“A rural North West that is economically prosperous, socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable.”

This would be achieved via action on the six identified priorities for the North West.

The North West Rural Board had asked the Rural Practitioners Steering Group to give further consideration to how the priorities (individually and collectively) would play out in particular places and impact on people within rural communities, The learning from this consideration would then be mainstreamed in to future RRDF activity and help to counterbalance any perceptions of top-down direction.

It was recognised that there was a wealth of experience in the region, and elsewhere, in delivery, organisations evaluating the impact of their policies, strategies and programmes at various geographical levels. The point of the project was to test out the interaction of partner policies, strategies and programmes at the community level and their ability to deliver against the individual and collective RRDF priorities.

It was hoped that the Council might be able to persuade GONW that Parish Councils such as Saughall and Shotwick Park needed to receive appropriate grant aid if the Government's programme was to be delivered in an effective way.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Ms Cooper be thanked for her attendance and informative presentation;
- (2) the Clerk be requested to supply Ms Cooper with e-mail addresses of Parish Plan contacts; and
- (3) a meeting be held at 7:30pm on either 20 or 22 February 2006 in the Parish Room to take this initiative forward.

28 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the following amendment, the Minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 9 and 23 January 2006 be confirmed as a correct record:

Minute No 9(a) – Golden Jubilee Park Development – How to make progress

The amount of £34,000 be replaced with £38,500+VAT

Minute No 14 – Minutes of Committees

29 January 2006 be replaced with 19 January 2006

29 COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Council noted the content of the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 9 January 2006 and the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 26 January 2006.

The Chairman informed that he intended to attend the Homewatch meeting scheduled for the evening of 15 February 2006. He would report on proceedings at the next Council meeting.

Minute No 12/2006 of the Finance and General Purposes Committee - Golden Jubilee Park – Tendering Arrangements contained recommendations to the Council.

The Chairman informed on why he had decided to add this item to the Finance and General Purposes Committee's agenda as urgent business and reported on the subsequent deliberations that had taken place when the item was under discussion by the Committee. Its recommendations were as follows:

Council be recommended to:

- “(1) note the requirements for accepting tenders, etc. as set out in the Council's Financial Regulations;
- (2) ensure that no contract is placed in the name of the Council be anyone other than the Clerk;
- (3) reaffirm the decision made at the Council meeting on 10 October 2005 to retrospectively accept Mr DJ Francis' quotation in the sum of £14,250.00 on the basis that the majority of the work has been carried out; and
- (4) reaffirm the decision made at the Council meeting held on 9 January 2006 to exceptionally accept the tender quotation from Mr DJ Francis as detailed in (3) above, for good reason.”

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 9 January 2006 be received;
- (2) the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 26 January 2006 be received and the recommendations contained therein and detailed above be endorsed; and

- (3) the Clerk be requested to write to Mr DJ Francis to inform him of what has been agreed.

30 GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK DEVELOPMENT

(a) Progress

The Chairman reported that no progress had been made since the last meeting and that the Clerk had taken no action and had not accepted Mr DJ Francis' tenders (Minute No 9/2006 refers) because of her concerns that had now been addressed under the previous item (Minute No 29/2006 of Council and Minute No 12/2006 of the Finance and General Purposes Committee refers).

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(b) Cheshire Community Strategy Innovations Fund 2005-06

A letter had been received from Cheshire County Council's Partnership Officer informing that the Council had been unsuccessful in its funding application. There had been a lot of competing applications and there had been limited resources.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

(c) Public Works Loan Board (PWLB)

The Chairman informed that the Golden Jubilee Park Project could be funded by a successful application to the PWLB for a loan. The PWLB was a Government Agency and made fixed rate loans for up to a fifty year payback period. It was noted that it was currently a sensible time to borrow at a fixed rate.

The Council, of course, would still try to attract as much grant aid as possible from various grant making bodies to assist the project.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to complete the PWLB loan application requesting £25,000 over a repayment period of thirty years and send it to the Cheshire Association of Local Councils.

(d) Ponds

Work was required on the ponds. Councillor C Wynne-Eyton had met with Mrs H Cakebread, a local environmentalist, to discuss what needed to be done. Mrs Cakebread had suggested that a poplar tree on the bank of the old pond be felled to improve the quality of the water. She had also informed that the new pond that was stagnant required a planting scheme to help oxygenise the water.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to write to Mrs Cakebread inviting her to attend the next Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting scheduled for 23 March 2006 to inform further on her proposals to bring about improvement to the environmental project in the Golden Jubilee Park.

(e) Fiddlers Lane Play Area

The Council gave consideration to the play equipment for younger children in the Fiddlers Lane Playing Field. Although there were aspirations to update by acquiring some new play equipment, it was acknowledged that what was currently in the field “was as good as you would find anywhere”.

It was accepted that the play equipment and fencing required a coat of paint.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) consideration be given to obtaining some new play equipment when Chester City Council’s Play Facilities grants become available; and
- (2) Mr H Wilkinson be asked to paint the current play equipment and the Cheshire fencing.

(f) Powersystems – Electrical Supply

The Council would need access to electricity in the new Golden Jubilee Park but was unsure of how the electricity would reach the land in question.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to write to Powersystems for advice on how to ensure electricity was available in the Golden Jubilee Park.

31 POLICE/HOMEWATCH

(a) Crime and Disorder

It was reported that youngsters continued to cause a nuisance at the back of Wain House. They were also using one of the bus shelters in the village as a goal and this could result in an accident. The Community Wardens had been informed of these activities.

(b) Homewatch

The Chairman had already indicated, when reviewing the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 26 January 2006, that he intended to attend the Homewatch meeting scheduled for 15 February 2006 and would report back to the Council on its proceedings.

(c) Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

The Council had received a letter dated 11 January 2006 from Mr Peter Fahy, Chief Constable, Cheshire Constabulary. He was seeking support to increase the number of PCSOs in the community. This action could enable the Parish to have a visible and known presence that based on his feedback of experience to date, would quickly and positively improve public reassurance and confidence.

The Home Office had allocated significant new funding but was assuming that partners and others in the community would contribute to enable forces to meet a national target of an additional 24,000 PCSOs across the country by 2006. The proportion allocated to Cheshire, Halton and Warrington was potentially an additional 274 PCSO posts bringing the total PCSOs to 353. In cash terms the Home Office was providing approximately 65% funding towards each PCSO. This meant that for approximately £11k this Council could provide a dedicated PCSO for the local community area.

A member of the project team would contact the Clerk in the near future in order to provide further information and seek the Council's views.

It was considered that a sensible approach may be to share the cost of a PCSO with two or three neighbouring Parish Councils.

RESOLVED:

That when the Clerk is contacted by the Project Team member she will request a presentation at a future Council meeting on this initiative.

32 ACCOUNTS

(a) Payments made since the meeting of the Council held on 9 January 2006:

<u>Financial Year 2005/2006</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>Cheque No</u>
Chester City Council (Outcome Funding Course for Councillor WI Humphrey)	25.00	101854
Cheshire County Council (Bus Shelter Scheme and Maintenance costs)	2,643.75	101855
Mrs S Hudspeth (Exp)	73.97	101856
Mrs S Hudspeth (Sal)	572.12	101857

(b) Receipts

Interest to 21 January 2006 (14 Day Account)	45.50
Interest to 23 January 2006 (Treasurer Account)	0.39
Chester City Council's Street Cleaning Grant October 2005 – March 2006	2,342.08
Cheshire County Playing Fields Association (Overpayment of subscription fee returned)	12.00
Mr R Shukla (Footpath booklets sold in Saughall Pharmacy)	40.00
Chester City Council (Area Committee grant aid for Golden Jubilee Park)	2,756.00

(c) Double Taxation and Chester City Council's Grant

A letter dated 19 January 2006 had been received by the Clerk from the Leader of Chester City Council, Councillor David Evans, following her letter to him of 10 January 2006 regarding the Council's concerns about the rumour circulating that the 2006/07 Double Taxation grant would be based on 50p per head, adjusted for inflation.

The Leader informed that the City Council's Cabinet's recommendation to the City Council was to approve in next year's budget a 50% increase in the level of the grant, that was a level of 75p per head. This would further reduce the financial burdens on the Council taxpayers in the Parish.

The Council welcomed this approach.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to write again to the Leader of Chester City Council informing him that this Council is pleased with this outcome and is looking forward to the full grant being achieved in the shortest possible timescale.

33 STREET CLEANING AND GROUND MAINTENANCE

The Clerk reported that the existing contractor's representative, Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council's Public Spaces Unit Manager – Operation Services, Mr Colin Bailey, had informed that his Council did not wish to tender for the work for the next four years due to internal service reforms concentrating services within the Borough's boundaries.

Consequently, a contract end-date and exit strategy would need to be agreed and it was proposed that a meeting be held with Mr Bailey to discuss this matter further in a practical and proactive way.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Clerk be requested to make the arrangements for a meeting between Parish Council representatives and Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council's Public Spaces Manager – Operation Services; and
- (2) the Clerk be requested to invite additional tenders from Mr P Gresty and Flintshire County Council for the Council's Street Cleaning and Grounds Maintenance Work.

34 HIGHWAY ISSUES

(a) Parked Cars

Community Police Officers had visited the village to assess the problem of cars parking on pavements, particularly on Long Lane and at the Ridings Community Infant School.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

(b) Bus Shelters

It was noted that the new bus shelters had now been completed and the invoice paid.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

(c) Saughall Hey Pavements

Concerns were raised over the state of the pavements on Saughall Hey from No 36. It was considered that this pavement was the responsibility of the Housing Trust.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to bring the state of the stretch of pavement from No 36 Saughall Hey to the attention of Chester and District Housing Trust and ask that appropriate action be taken to remedy the problem.

35 YOUTH ACTIVITIES

The Council had made provision in its 2006/07 Budget to assist the activities of the young people of the village.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to include an article in the forthcoming newsletter informing that the Council has financial provision to pump prime certain youth activities and is seeking appropriate applications that will be evaluated and determined.

36 PARISH COUNCIL SURGERIES

RESOLVED:

That Councillor C Wynne-Eyton be requested to preside over the next Parish Council Surgery scheduled for Saturday, 4 March 2006 between 10:00am and 10:45am in the Parish Room, 2 Fiddlers Lane, Saughall.

37 PLANNING

(a) Chester City Council

The Council noted the contents of a letter of support that the Clerk had sent to Barrow Parish Council Chairman, Ann Faulkner, on 12 January 2006 (Minute No

15/2006 refers). The Council was supporting her Council in a vote of no confidence in the City Council's Planners.

No further developments were reported in respect of this issue.

RESOLVED:

That the situation be noted.

(b) Village Design Statements

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to write to the Chief Executive of Cheshire Community Council requesting that she send one of her officers to the April Council meeting to make a presentation on Village Design Statements.

38 VERNON INSTITUTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Councillor RA Storrar reported that there would be a meeting of the Vernon Institute Management Committee the following evening.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor RA Storrar be requested to bring a report on the proceedings of the Vernon Institute Management Committee's meeting scheduled for 7 February 2006 to the next meeting of the Council.

39 ODD JOBS

RESOLVED:

That in the absence of Councillor C Moss this item be deferred until the next meeting of the Council.

40 ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

(a) Chester City Council's Gowy North Area Committee
Thursday, 2 February 2006, 7:00pm-9:00pm
Christleton High School, Plough Lane, Christleton

The Chairman had attended the Area Committee meeting and provided a report on its proceedings.

Worthy of particular note was the new funding round in respect of recreational facilities. It was noted that this would be discussed at the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 23 March 2006. Also under discussion had been Chester City Council's Community Wardens Scheme.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and a Community Warden be invited to attend a future Council meeting to discuss his/her role, etc.

41 CIRCULARS

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

Chester City Council's Council Agenda – 25 January 2006

Chester City Council's Highways and Transportation Local Joint Committee – agenda for meeting held 26 January 2006 – no issues to be discussed involving Saughall

42 CHESHIRE COMMUNITY COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY PRIDE COMPETITION 2006

RESOLVED:

That the Council will not enter this competition because it is too onerous and the Council has other priorities.