

MINUTES OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK'S PARISH MEETING held on 23 May 2005 at the Vernon Institute, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor A Bailey (in the Chair)  
Councillor Mrs P Humphrey  
Councillor Mrs J Johnson  
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar  
Councillor RA Storrar  
Councillor Mrs D Whitton  
Councillor C Wynne-Eyton  
Councillor Mrs M Wynne-Eyton

Sergeant D Barter, Cheshire Constabulary

and 8 parishioners as recorded in the attendance register

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor B Kerr  
Councillor C Moss

2 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Minutes of Saughall and Shotwick Park's Parish Meeting held on 24 May 2004 be confirmed as a correct record; and
- (2) it be noted that Councillors Mrs J Johnson and Mrs JE Storrar had been in attendance at the previous year's meeting but had forgotten to sign the attendance register and Councillor Mrs M Wynne-Eyton also wished to apologise for her absence from that meeting.

3 CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

The Chairman welcomed Parishioners to their Annual Assembly and then presented his Annual Report setting out the Council's achievements and successes over the last twelve months. He detailed on-going initiatives and the Council's aims and aspirations for the future.

Various issues were highlighted and considered in detail, these included:

**General Issues:**

- ? Last year a commitment had been made to reduce the number of meetings of the Council by reviewing its Committee structure. Consequently, in the 2004/2005 Municipal Year formal meetings had been reduced by 7 from 55 to 48.

- ? The Council had reviewed the frequency of Parish Surgeries, held on Saturday mornings, in the Parish Room, 2 Fiddlers Lane. They were now held once a month instead of once a week. Attendance was poor. This valuable provision was advertised and Councillors did want to meet and talk to parishioners.
- ? Concerns continued over the Parish Council not being consulted or having any input into planning applications on the Welsh Border that when passed impacted on the village, its facilities and particularly its roads. Flintshire County Council had no statutory obligation to inform this Council but it was hoped that a planning protocol could be drawn up.

### **National Issues:**

- ? A5117 Deeside Park Junctions Improvements Scheme
- ? Freedom of Information Act 2000
- ? Quality Parish Council Initiative

There were 52 separate consultation documents sent to this Council from National, Regional and Local sources, either giving the Council information or requesting the views of Councillors.

### **Local Issues:**

- ? Affordable Housing in Saughall

The Council was informed in April that the Saughall Scheme was now designated as a 'Reserve Scheme'. This meant that if there was any funding left over in the Housing Association's overall scheme, the Saughall Scheme may be funded.

- ? Bus Services in Saughall

Cheshire County Council had cut several subsidies to ChesterBus. This meant that ChesterBus in turn had to cut some of its services.

The Managing Director of ChesterBus had addressed the Council in January and announced various improvements to the service for Saughall. He did not inform of changes to the route from the Town Hall through to the Railway Station via the City Centre and Frodsham Street.

On 4 April 2005 major changes to timings and routes were introduced. The new bus service routed through The Ridings more frequently, most buses didn't travel along Saughall Road, Blacon going along Parkgate Road instead, cutting out the Garden Lane area altogether. All services now terminated at the Town Hall and there were very infrequent cross-city services to the Railway Station.

Discussions were on-going and the Councils goal was to persuade ChesterBus to provide a suitable cross-city service terminating at the Railway Station for Saughall.

- ? Bus Shelters

The bus shelter on Church Road at the junction with Saughall Hey remained an issue of concern. It was regularly vandalised and used as a meeting place for

youths causing a nuisance and engaging in anti-social behaviour. Sergeant Barter had been requested to give this problem his attention.

The Council continued to work in partnership with Cheshire County Council and had applied for two more shelters to be provided at Church Road, opposite the Doctor's Surgery, and also on Hermitage Road.

#### ? Double Taxation

Last year the Chairman had reported that every Parish Council in the Chester District was continuing to press Chester City Council to review its financial arrangements with Parish Councils.

At long last first steps had been taken to remedy this situation. A Review Panel had reported and awarded every Parish in the Chester District 50p per head of population (£1,585 for Saughall and Shotwick Park), rising eventually to £1 (£3,170) in future years.

#### ? Golden Jubilee Park

The Council continued to explore every avenue in order to obtain the necessary grant aid to assist this scheme. It would provide a major public facility that all Saughall residents could be proud of in the future.

The Council had obtained planning permission to change the use of the land from agricultural to recreational and to pipe a ditch and put in an additional pond to help preserve Great Crested Newts – a protected species.

Saughall Colts had indicated that they did not wish to use the new facilities because they wanted five football pitches and the Council could only provide three on its land on Fiddlers Lane. The Colts did not want to use the new facilities and their current one at the same time and so decided to withdraw from the Partnership.

Last year Chester City Council, through its Gowy North Area Committee, had granted the Council £10,000 over two years towards the Golden Jubilee Park development.

WREN had agreed to provide a grant of £25,000 for drainage work and a meeting with its Project Manager was arranged for the following day to progress the scheme.

#### ? Parish Plan

The Parish Plan had been launched and a copy of the Snapshot Report has been delivered to every household in the Parish.

The Plan would enable the Council to develop projects that the residents wanted in Saughall and Shotwick Park.

The Countryside Agency provided a grant of £5,000 towards the compilation and distribution of the Parish Plan.

## ? Policing Issues

Sergeant Barter would be introducing a completely new method of policing in line with the rest of Cheshire. Saughall would no longer be policed by Chester Rural Section from Mickle Trafford but from the new Police Station in Blacon.

## ? A Thank You

The Chairman thanked all Councillors for their continued hard work on behalf the residents of Saughall. He reminded the Assembly that they were not volunteers but sworn officials of local government who gave their time and services for free in order to put something back into the community.

## 4 PUBLIC DISCUSSION

The following issues were raised and considered:

### - Status of the Planning Application to locate a Telephone Mast in Saughall

The Planning Officer had visited the site but no decision had yet been taken on whether or not to grant planning permission. The Parish Council had put forward its concerns, in its role as a statutory consultee.

### - ChesterBus – older people were unable to access City Centre shops e.g. Marks and Spencer/Tesco, because they could not carry their shopping back to the bus stop for the return journey to Saughall.

The Council would continue to press ChesterBus for a cross-city link service.

### - The problem of speeding traffic on Sea Hill Road – There were stables on this road and riders and horses were in danger.

The Council had to prove the speed of the traffic to get the Highway Authority's support for traffic calming measures to be put in place. A survey had recently been carried out and the Council would ask for a copy of the findings.

The Council would investigate the possibility of buying its own speed gun as Mickle Trafford Parish Council had done. The Constabulary would train volunteers on how to use it.

It was noted that Hermitage Road also had problems with speeding traffic.

### - Concerns were raised over hedges overhanging pathways.

The Council would write to residents asking them to cut back hedges that were obstructing the pathways in the village.

## 5 CRIME AND DISORDER

Sergeant David Barter explained the new policing structure that had been introduced on 18 April 2005.

There were 18 neighbourhood policing units in Chester. Each one was headed by an Inspector and four Sergeants as well as teams of investigating officers.

Sergeant Barter was responsible for Blacon and Saughall. He explained what the Officers did and how to get in touch with the police. He had 7 Constables under his command and could call on another 20. His team was dispatched to Saughall every day and sometimes they visited twice.

#### Nuisance Youth Activity

It would always exist but it was not acceptable. The Sergeant set out how the police intended to deal with it to keep the environment pleasant for residents. He also detailed the successes the Police had with ASBOs in Blacon.

The Sergeant's Community Action Team came out to speak to young people and deal with minor damage.

The Sergeant asked residents to be persistent when they rang the Police because the queuing system was not as long as people thought. There had been problems in getting through to the Police following the introduction of the new switchboard in Winsford. Confidence in the Police was at an all time low and people wanted to see a presence in the village, not just in a car but on foot. It was noted that responses were graded. The Police tried to provide the best service they could within their limited resources.

A strong role was seen for the Homewatch and the Homewatch's Co-ordinator was enhanced as a result of the new policing arrangements. The best approach was for people to ring the police when they experienced situations or problems. Apathy was not the answer, they should tell the police. Then, if nothing was done the Parish Council would take action. Councillors hoped to see a lot more Police Officers on the streets of Saughall as a result of the new policing arrangements.

#### 6 VOTE OF THANKS

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance. He also thanked Members again for their support during his third year as Chairman.