

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH
COUNCIL held on 5 March 2007 at the Vernon Institute, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor DF Holman
Councillor Mrs P Humphrey
Councillor WI Humphrey (Homewatch Co-ordinator)
Councillor Mrs J Johnson
Councillor JG Johnson
Councillor B Kerr (in the Chair)
Councillor C Moss
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar
Councillor RA Storrar
Councillor HL Thorniley-Jones
Councillor A Warrington
Councillor Mrs JM Young

County Councillor D Rowlands (Part)

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Council received representations from Mr Oliver of Hermitage Road about speeding traffic on that road. It was noted that Cheshire County Council, the Highways Authority, had no plans and no funds for traffic calming in Saughall. It was suggested that the Council concentrate its efforts on traffic calming rather than on trying to prevent people parking on pavements. It was noted that a lot of children lived on Hermitage Road and speed reduction measures were needed.

Speeding on Hermitage Road was most prevalent early in the morning and late in the afternoon/early evening.

The Chairman assured Mr Oliver that speeding traffic through Saughall, and specifically on Hermitage Road, was a matter of concern to the Council too and it would be discussed when the item was reached on the agenda and the points he had raised would be taken into account.

35 PERSONAL STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman made a personal statement informing that if his name was put forward as a nomination for the election of Chairman in the next Municipal Year he would decline the invitation. He told the Council that he was resigning as Chairman with immediate effect and detailed his personal reasons for doing so.

RESOLVED:

That the Chairman's resignation be accepted with regret and he be wished well for the future.

Councillor Mrs J Young, Vice Chairman (in the Chair)

36 APOLOGIES FOR AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Apologies for authorised absence were received from:

Councillor RK Shukla
Councillor Mrs D Whitton

37 CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were received.

38 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 5 and 6 February 2007 be confirmed as a correct record:

39 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 5 February 2007 be received.

40 CONSULTATION ON AMENDMENTS TO THE MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY MEMBERS

Pursuant to Minute No 10(a)/2007 Members gave further consideration to the consultation document produced by the Department of Communities and Local Government on Amendments to the Model Code of Conduct. Chester City Council had requested comments by 9 March 2007.

RESOLVED:

That Chester City Council's Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, Mr Charles Kerry, be informed that this Council is concerned that it is proposed to combine four current Model Codes of Conduct applying to various categories of Local Authority Members into one consolidated Code and that it is considered that such a complex approach will make the Code onerous and difficult to apply.

41 QUALITY TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL SCHEME

The Council considered a letter dated 6 February 2007 from Ms Kathleen Kelliher, Rural Social and Communication Division at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), informing that the recently published Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill had affected plans for reviewing the Quality Town and Parish Council Scheme. If enacted, the Bill was expected to confirm the White Paper's commitment to extend the power of well-being to all parish and town councils that satisfied criteria based on the Quality Town and Parish Council Scheme.

The letter informed that depending on the detail of the criteria, on which the Department intended to consult later in the year, the result of the process may be the introduction of a statutory scheme (i.e. a scheme based on legislation). This could effectively succeed the Quality Town and Parish Council Scheme, which did not have a statutory basis.

The letter went on to clarify some on-going arrangements for the Scheme, reiterated the Department's commitment to it and encouraged all Town and Parish Councils to seek accreditation.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the letter from DEFRA be noted and the promised consultation document be awaited.

42 YOUTH ISSUES

(a) Meeting Between Councillors and Young People of Saughall

Councillor Mrs H Thorniley-Jones reported on the proceedings of a meeting held on 22 February 2007 between Council representatives and young people of the village, facilitated with the help of Cheshire County Council's Outreach Worker Mr Skippy Roberts.

The meeting had been well attended (approximately 20 people) a lot more young people than expected had turned up. They had indicated that they would like the following provisions made available to them:

- Supervised trips
- Somewhere to meet that is dry and warm
- A youth shelter/pod and a basketball court (American style)

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Councillor Mrs H Thorniley-Jones be thanked for her hard work in arranging the meeting and identifying the facilities youngsters wanted to see in the village; and
- (2) the Finance and General Purposes Committee be requested to give consideration to providing and siting a youth pod in Saughall and report its recommendations to the next meeting of the Council.

(b) Saughall Youth Club

Councillor Mrs H Thorniley-Jones informed that the Youth Club had a newly signed constitution and was now open as follows:

- Monday, 6:30pm-8:30pm for children 7-10 years
- Tuesday, 7:00pm-9:00pm Secondary School children

Councillor Mrs JE Storrar informed that she had access to a funding pack for a project for young people and agreed to provide copies for Councillors Mrs H Thorniley-Jones and Mrs J Young.

It was hoped that the new Community Police Support Officer, Michael Butler, would lend his support and assistance to the Youth Club.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

43 GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK DEVELOPMENT

(a) Possible Re-siting of the Basketball Court

RESOLVED:

That consideration be given to re-siting the basketball court at the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee scheduled for 7:30pm on Thursday, 15 March 2007.

(b) Saughall Cricket Club – Amended Planning Application

It was reported that Chester City Council, the Planning Authority, had granted planning permission to the Cricket Club to site a storage container to the rear of the Uniform Groups' building on the Park to provide safe storage for grounds maintenance equipment.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(c) Car Parking Provision

Councillor B Kerr reported that Ringwood Fencing had telephoned him and informed him that it would be mid-March, at the earliest, before they were able to proceed with the fencing work. They would be in touch prior to commencement.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(d) Current State of the Park

Members had expressed concern over the state of the Park and requested that the contractor be asked to clear up the mess and take the rubbish away. It was reported that the Park was now tidy as Mr Des Francis had conceded to this request.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(e) Fiddlers Lane Playing Field

The Clerk had received an email from Mr A Dymond who had been contracted to inspect the children's play area equipment and carry out general maintenance on 26 February 2007 informing that he would be on site on 28 February 2007. As she was in Saughall on 27 February 2007 she had left a copy in Councillor C Moss' mailbox in the hope that he would be able to confirm that the agreed inspection and maintenance had been carried out as arranged.

However, unbeknown to the Clerk, Councillor Moss had written to Cheshire Association of Local Councils' Chief Office, Jackie Weaver, on 16 February 2007 raising concerns about his role in respect of grass cutting and odd jobs and over the point she had made regarding delegation at the training sessions she had held in Saughall the previous year.

Mrs Weaver had responded and Councillor Moss read out her letter. She informed that the Local Government Act 1972 S101 enabled a Council to arrange for the discharge of any of its functions by a Committee, a Sub-Committee, an officer or another Local Authority. Therefore, it could not delegate to an individual Councillor but it could delegate to the proper officer or Clerk.

Therefore, any request that a Councillor deal with matters arising from a contractor was problematic. A Councillor could act as a conduit for information but could not take decisions on behalf of the Council.

This response led Members to consider their position in respect of the Golden Jubilee Park and its Project Co-ordinator and the expertise that would be needed to see the development through to completion.

Concerns were raised that the Cheshire Railings that were being removed because of the major roadworks on the junction of the A540 and A5117 had not been given to the Council as promised by the Highways Agency. This fencing was to be used to fence the Golden Jubilee Park. Councillor Mrs J Young agreed to discuss the position regarding the Cheshire Railings with representatives of Carillion.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) a Committee (to be known as "The Field Committee" consisting of Councillors WI Humphrey , C Moss, A Warrington and Mrs J Young be established to oversee and co-ordinate the Golden Jubilee Park Development;
- (2) co-options onto the Committee be considered when expertise is required;
- (3) the Clerk be requested to provide the Committee with a detailed drawing of the site;
- (4) consideration be given to taking down one of the goal posts as it is too close to the fence;
- (5) the Clerk be requested to ask Mr Des Francis to provide a schedule of work with timescales and aim to complete it by the end of May 2007;
- (6) the Field Committee be requested to give consideration to whom to approach regarding sponsorship of the proposed youth pod; and
- (7) Councillor C Moss be requested to purchase two mole traps at £7.71 each, for which he will be reimbursed by the Clerk, and attempt to catch moles on the field on Fiddlers Lane.

(a) Homewatch

Councillor WI Humphrey, in his capacity as Homewatch Coordinator, provided the Council with a report setting out issues and details of criminal activity in the village.

It was noted that there had been an increase in nuisance youth activity including vandalism during school half-term week.

It was reported that Michael Butler had been appointed as Saughall's Police Community Support Officer and he was currently undergoing training.

It was also reported that the side panel had been removed from the bus shelter on Church Road and the Clerk was asked to find out if Cheshire County Council's Principal Policy and Projects Officer was aware of this.

RESOLVED:

That the Homewatch Co-ordinator's report be noted.

(b) Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

It was reported that the Service Level Agreement for the provision of a PCSO to cover the Saughall and Shotwick Park area at a cost of £11,000 per annum for the first three years had been signed and returned to the Constabulary.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

(c) Cheshire and Warrington Rural Social and Community Programme (RSCP) Community Safety Challenge

The RSCP Community Safety Challenge was aimed at creating safer rural communities in Cheshire and Warrington. It was looking to fund three projects, up to £10,000 each. Projects would be funded that involved local people/volunteers from rural communities. The Clerk had submitted a bid on the Council's behalf.

The aim for Saughall was that the new PCSO would roll out and support Home and Country Watch Schemes, embark on proactive Traffic Safety Schemes and work with the young people of the parish to find alternative diversions to ensure reduced anti-social behaviour in the area. The funding bid was for a new Neighbourhood Management Team to ensure that these ambitions and challenging plans became a reality. Volunteers would require training, equipment and premises would have to be identified and acquired.

The aims of the new Neighbourhood Management Team were:

- the consistent presence of dedicated neighbourhood teams capable of working with the community to establish and maintain control – to be visible, accessible, skilled, knowledgeable and familiar to the community;
- intelligence-led identification of community concerns leading to prompt, effective, targeted actions against those concerns;
- joint action and problem solving with the community and other local partners in order to improve the local environment and quality of life within the community

This project would not simply be about police outcomes, it was also aimed to align local policing activity to a neighbourhood management and community agenda and towards a style and culture where neighbourhood specialists could directly impact upon confidence and satisfaction levels through effective problem solving, greater partnership working and through closer interaction and co-operation with local people.

RESOLVED:

That the decision on the funding application be awaited.

45 ACCOUNTS

(a) Payments made since the meeting of the Council held on 5 February 2007:

RESOLVED:

That the following payments be approved:

<u>Financial Year 2006/2007</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>Cheque No</u>
Mrs S Hudspeth (Expenses)	96.84	101959
Mrs S Hudspeth (Salary)	589.04	101960
Mr R Hipkiss (February 2007 Street Cleaning)	910.23	101961

(b) Receipts

RESOLVED:

That the following receipt be noted:

	£
Interest to 21 February 2007 (14 Day Account)	131.09

(c) Cash to Bank Reconciliation

RESOLVED:

That the content of the cash to Bank Reconciliation be noted.

(d) Bank Mandate

The Clerk informed that the HSBC Bank was going through its records to try to establish why it had reverted to a previous bank mandate. She would be contacted when the Bank was in a position to explain what had happened.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk report further to the Council on the bank mandate once the HSBC Bank has completed its enquiries and its findings are known.

46 HIGHWAY ISSUES

(a) Parked Cars on Pavements

It was reported that contractors working on Roslyn on Long Lane continued to park on the pavement and the grass verge despite being requested not to do so by residents. Consequently, the verge had been churned up and was now in a mess. There were also problems with parking on pavements outside the two village schools at dropping off and picking up times.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the Clerk be requested write to the owner of Roslyn, Long Lane asking him to:

- stop his contractors parking on the pavement and grass verge
- and asking that he make good the damage

and;

(2) the new PCSO, Michael Butler, be requested to take priority action in respect of anyone parking on the pavements or grass verges when he commences his employment in Saughall.

(b) A5117 Major Roadworks

The Clerk informed that she had received a (first) newsletter from Carillion that she would make available for Members' information.

(c) Speeding Traffic

(a) Speed Gun

Councillors WI and Mrs P Humphrey, Mrs JE Storrar, A Warrington and D Holman had been trained to use the speed gun and a request had been made by the Clerk for the Council to go on the waiting list to borrow it.

Councillor RA Storrar informed that he had spoken to the Portfolio Holder responsible for Highways at Cheshire County Council and to Mr Chris Garner, the Area Maintenance Engineer, and set out his concerns regarding speeding traffic through Saughall.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to invite the appropriate County Council Officer to attend a future meeting to discuss possible traffic calming measures.

(b) Cheshire County Council's 'SET THE PACE – MAKE A COMMITMENT' Initiative

County Councillor D Rowlands informed that 'Set the Pace – Make a Commitment' was a community focused anti-speeding campaign led by the County Council's Road Safety Unit and supported by its Highways Engineers and Cheshire Police.

The campaign asked the motorist/passenger to make a personal written commitment to drive or encourage others to drive at an appropriate speed for the environment and road conditions and always within the legal speed limit; to practise 'safer speed behaviour'.

The hope was that with an increasing number of people making this commitment to 'Set the Pace' Cheshire communities would begin to feel significant benefits such as:

- a reduction of the speed of vehicles travelling through villages/towns
- a safer environment in which to walk, cycle and ride
- a sense of community spirit as everyone works together to tackle an issue
- a reduction in the frequency and/or severity of speed related incidents
- and most importantly, it may help save a life

There were also extra personal incentives for signing up such as:

- a reward scheme
- a regular newsletter

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

(d) Footpaths

Members reported that the village footpaths were in a poor state and required attention and paths on Hermitage Road, Rakeway and Parkway were of particular concern. Also, the path on Church Road was very slippery and an accident was waiting to happen.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk contact Mr Graham Anderton, the District Engineer, and request he visits Saughall and carries out a footpath inspection accompanied by Members of the Council.

(e) Hermitage Road – Hedges

It was reported that the overgrown hedge on Hermitage Road had now been cut back.

RESOLVED:

That the position be noted.

(f) Street Lighting

It was reported that No 3 street light in Greenway was in a dangerous condition and needed replacing.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to alert Cheshire County Council's Street Lighting Section to the street light in Greenway requiring urgent attention.

47 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

(a) Public Rights of Way – Kissing Gate Project

The Clerk reported that Parish Councils were being invited to apply for up to 15 Kissing Gates (to be purchased by the County Council) in their areas to replace stiles and so increase accessibility for those people with mobility problems.

Consequently, on receipt of the letter dated 7 February 2007 from the Countryside Access Team leader, Ms Amy Rushton, the Clerk had written to the Parish Council's Footpath Warden, Mr Tony Leach, asking him to identify suitable sites for Kissing Gates. He had responded enclosing a footpath map on which he had plotted all possible sites for Kissing Gates in Saughall.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to make an application to Cheshire County Council for Kissing Gates to replace stiles as detailed on the footpath map provided by the Parish Footpath Warden.

(b) Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005
Review of Dog Control Orders 2007

The Clerk reported that Chester City Council was reviewing the locations of Dog Control Areas and was seeking views on the new locations proposed. A list of existing sites designated last year and a list of the proposed locations had been provided.

Members were pleased to see that the Golden Jubilee Park was on the list of requests for a dog ban for this year.

It was reported that a parishioner was "lamping" foxes and rabbits on the Golden Jubilee Park using dogs.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the report be received; and

(2) the Clerk be requested to write to the individual concerned telling him not to take his dogs on to the Golden Jubilee Park.

48 PARISH COUNCIL SURGERIES

Councillor RA Storrar reported that Councillor C Moss was the only visitor at the Parish Council Surgery held on 3 March 2007.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Mrs P Humphrey be requested to preside over the next Parish Council Surgery scheduled for Saturday, 31 March 2007 in the Parish Room on Fiddlers Lane, Saughall between 10:00am and 10:45am and bring a report on proceedings to the Council meeting on 2 April 2007.

49 VERNON INSTITUTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (VIMC)

Councillor Mrs J Young reported that she had attended the last meeting of the VIMC. She had provided it with the details of the funding opportunity presented by Chester City Council's Goway North Area Committee.

The Committee was keen to acquire funding to insulate the Vernon Institute building and was looking at the central heating system with a view to isolating some rooms in order to reduce heating costs.

Councillor A Warrington raised concerns over the cowl on the top of the vent on the roof of the Vernon Institute building and Councillor Mrs J Young agreed to bring this to the attention of the VIMC.

RESOLVED:

That the reports be received.

50 ODD JOBS

The Council gave consideration to jobs it wanted Mr H Wilkinson to carry out around the village.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to ask Mr H Wilkinson to undertake the following:

- remove and scrap the vandalised litter bin at the end of the Ridings Estate on Hermitage Road;
- try to repair the damaged litter bin at the end of Meadows Lane; and
- replace the faded map in the case on the outside wall of the Vernon Institute building with a Saughall footpath map.

51 DAMAGED STREET SIGNS

It was reported that the Newcroft street sign had been damaged.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to report that damaged street sign to Mr A James at Chester City Council.

52 ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

(a) Representation at meetings of Outside Bodies

- (i) NALC Conference – Building the Future of Local Communities
5-7 October 2007 at the Bournemouth International Centre

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to book a conference place at a cost of £340.75 and a hotel for Councillor WI Humphrey who will represent the Council.

- (ii) Ashton Hayes Going Carbon Neutral 2007 Conference
Saturday, 14 April 2007 at the University of Chester.

RESOLVED:

That there be no Parish Council representative at this event.

- (iii) Gowy North Area Committee
7:00pm, Thursday, 8 March 2007 at Kelsall County Primary School, Flat Lane,
Kelsall

RESOLVED:

That Councillor WI Humphrey be requested to represent the Council at this event and bring a report to the next Council meeting.

53 NEWSLETTER

It was reported that the next Parish Council newsletter would be presented to the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee at its meeting on 15 March 2007 and contributions from Members were requested.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

54 COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED

The Clerk reported that she had received letters from the Cheshire Association of Local Councils setting out progress following motions at the Annual Meeting and copies had been circulated with the agenda.

RESOLVED:

That the progress made with the motions following the Annual Meeting of the Cheshire Association of Local Councils be noted.

55 CIRCULARS

The following circulars had been received. Any one wishing to see a copy would contact the Clerk.

Chester City Council's Proposals for Unitary Local Government – January 2007
Cheshire Association of Local Councils – Training Dates 2007 (Copies attached)
Chester City Council's The Past Uncovered – February 2007
Cheshire County Council's Cheshire Matters – February 2007