

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH  
COUNCIL held on 2 July 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 RK Shukla  
Councillor HL Thorniley-Jones  
Councillor A Warrington  
Councillor Mrs JM Young (in the Chair)

Mr H Dobson (Internal Auditor)  
Mr B Huxley (Saughall Cricket Club)

PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Council heard representations from Mr G Butler of 51 Hermitage Road, Saughall. Mr Butler considered that the Council was not making the most of Cheshire County Council's Transforming Learning Communities initiative (Minute No 105/2007 refers) and was more focused on graveyard provision.

Mr Butler also believed that the Council was not keeping its electorate adequately informed on what it was doing and informed that "something's were mistifyings".

Of particular concern to Mr Butler was the standard of the children's play equipment on the Fiddlers Lane Playing Field. He described it as "being from the 1960s and the worst around". He requested that the Council look at the modern play equipment that was provided in surrounding areas. He was surprised that play equipment replacement was not one of the Council's priorities.

117 APOLOGIES FOR AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Apologies for authorised absence were received from:

Councillor B Kerr  
Councillor C Moss  
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar  
Councillor RA Storrar  
Councillor Mrs D Whitton  
PCSO M Butler

118 CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(a) Adoption of the new Local Authorities Model Code of Conduct

The Council currently operated under the Model Code of Conduct, which all Members and co-opted Members must sign up to as part of their declarations of acceptance of office.

Following consultation, the Government had now issued a revised Code and the Parish Council had until 1 October 2007 to adopt it. If it was not adopted by then, the new Code would apply by default.

Not all parts of the Model Code were relevant to parish councils so the Standards Board for England had prepared a Model Code for Parish and Town Councils. It had recommended that the Council should adopt the Model Code un-amended with one exception.

Paragraph 12(2) was ‘voluntary’ for parish councils. It gave Members with a prejudicial interest the same rights as members of the public to speak at a meeting on issues and then leave before the main discussion and the vote. For Members to take advantage of this new freedom, the Council must “opt in” for the provision to apply and it needed to be included in its resolution.

Members noted that the aim of the new Code was that it was simpler and clearer to understand and that it would allow Members to represent their constituents on matters that concerned them. In the interest of good governance, the Parish Council was recommended to adopt the new Code.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Model Code of Conduct for Parish and Town Councils be adopted with immediate effect; and
- (2) paragraph 12(2), the provision which is voluntary for parish councils, be also adopted with immediate effect.

(b) Sensitive Information

The Clerk had received a letter dated 21 June 2007 from Mr Charles Kerry, Chester City Council’s Monitoring Officer, that informed of the new facility under the new Code which allowed certain “sensitive information” not to be included in the Members’ Register of Interests and so be not available to the public.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of Mr Kerry’s letter be noted.

(c) Declarations of Interest

Councillor Mrs H Thorniley-Jones declared a personal interest in item 13(b), the date on which the Christmas lights would be switched on (Minute No 129/2007 refers), because of her business interest in respect of the greyhound Public House.

119 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 4 June 2007 be confirmed as a correct record.

120 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the following Committees be received:

Planning held on 4 June 2007

Finance and General Purposes held on 21 June 2007

121 POLICE/HOMEWATCH

(a) Police

PCSO Mike Butler had submitted a written report detailing the following, along with his current shift pattern:

- PCSO Butler was now carrying a mobile phone so that the Parish Council could contact him.
- The village as a whole had been quiet apart from some issues of youths drinking on the Fiddlers Lane Playing Field.
- PCSO Butler knew who was responsible for the graffiti on fences around the field. When graffiti removal equipment was available the person responsible for the graffiti would remove it.
- PCSO Butler had no authority to deal with fly posting but it was a power that may be added to his job description in October 2007. He had asked a representative of Antler Homes, who was responsible for fly posters in the village, to contact the Council.
- There was a weight restriction on the main road through Saughall of 7.5 tonnes. There was signage as you enter Saughall via Seahill Road but no signage coming in from Long Lane.
- The person(s) responsible for the theft of money from the Church had not been found but the person involved in the burglary at the Wheatsheaf Public House had been caught.

RESOLVED:

That PCSO Mike Butler's report be received.

(b) Homewatch

Councillor WI Humphrey, in his capacity as Homewatch Coordinator, reported that the new car park markers had been taken from the Golden Jubilee Park.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Homewatch Co-ordinator's report be received; and
- (2) the Clerk be requested to ask the contractors who put down the mesh if there was an adhesive available that could be used to secure the car parking markers.

(c) RSCP Community Safety Challenge – Neighbourhood Management Team

Councillor WI Humphrey reported on progress in respect of the Neighbourhood Management Team initiative as follows:

- The Project Co-ordinator's post was being advertised and it was hoped that someone would be employed before the next Council meeting. He/she would need a Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) check.
- Arrangements would be made to take out third party liability insurance.
- A bank account would need to be opened for the Saughall Neighbourhood Management Team so that the £10,000 grant could be paid in.
- 12 July 2007 was the first impact day.

The Clerk informed that the Headteacher at the Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School had failed to respond to the Clerk's two letters asking if she would let her pupils either draw pictures or make a model of Saughall highlighting areas that they perceived needed attention to make them feel safer and reduce resident's fear of crime.

RESOLVED:

That the reports be received.

122 YOUTH ISSUES

(a) Youth Pod/Shelter – Good Practice Guide

RESOLVED:

That this report be deferred until the next meeting of the Council.

(b) Saughall Youth Club

Councillor Mrs H Thorniley-Jones reported on current difficulties facing the Youth Club. The vicar was calling a meeting in an attempt to find a way forward.

Until the current difficulties were resolved there was no point in discussing the proposal for the Council to financially support an outing for those youngsters who regularly attended the Youth Club.

Councillor Mrs H Thorniley-Jones had the correspondence in respect of the Youth Opportunities and Youth Capital Funds 2007/08 grant aid from Chester City Council. She would take the necessary action.

RESOLVED:

That the reports be received.

(a) Parked Cars on Pavements

It was reported that parked cars on pavements had been identified as an issue following the recent survey at the Village Fayre. "Hot spots" were Long Lane and around the garage on Church Road.

RESOLVED:

That PCSO Mike Butler be informed of the survey findings in respect of parked cars in the hope that action can be taken to eradicate the problem.

(b) A5117 Major Roadworks

RESOLVED:

That progress with the major roadworks continue to be monitored.

(c) Current Highway Problems

The following problems were reported:

- large indent full of water on Church Road by the Nursery
- a grid blocked on Church Road between the garage and the pharmacy
- raw sewage at the Peg on Hermitage Road
- four areas regularly flooded in the village
- Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School – hedge is causing viability problems for motorists leaving the Co-operative Store
- Abbey Hey, Church Road – wall may collapse onto footpath

RESOLVED:

That these problems be reported to the District Engineer, Mr Graham Anderton.

(d) Speeding Traffic

Members agreed arrangements in respect of the speed gun that was being loaned to the Council at the beginning of August 2007.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to liaise with Mr Derek Bowker of the Cheshire Constabulary for the drop off of the speed gun, refresher training and confirmation of the locations where the gun can be used.

(a) Progress Report

The Council noted the contents of letters sent to Mr Des Francis by the Clerk on 12 and 24 June 2007. The Chairman reported that she had spoken to Mr Francis who had agreed that he would address all of the issues (finish the perimeter path, de-stoning, reseeding, etc) and complete his work on the field to a standard that the Council expected. His work had been delayed because of inclement weather.

Mr Brain Huxley of the Saughall Cricket Club informed that the Club had bought some delicate grass cutting equipment but would not be able to use it until the land had been de-stoned properly. He also informed that Mr Francis was supposed to contact him so that he could mark out the cricket wicket before the seeding took place but this had not happened.

RESOLVED:

That the reports be received.

(b) Tenax Mesh

The mesh had been laid but only 20 rolls were needed not 23 as previously quoted by Mr John Young of Tenax. Tenax had taken 3 rolls back and then had tried to charge £58 for doing so. The Clerk had refused to pay the £58 because no agreement had been made to do so and because Mr Young had over quoted.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(c) Gate

The gate was warped and was to be replaced with a gate in accordance with RoSPA standards. In the interim Councillor Moss had modified it to avoid accidents.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(d) Trees and Ponds

All Cheshire Garden Services had been carrying out the work as necessary, as identified by the Tree and Environmental Warden.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(e) Field Drainage and Flooding on Fiddlers Lane

The Chairman informed that she would progress this after Mr Francis had carried out further de-stoning.

RESOLVED:

That the Council will determine work to be included in further phases of the Golden Jubilee Park Development at its meeting on 3 September 2007.

(f) Fiddlers Lane Playing Field

The Clerk had put in a bid for two pieces of play equipment via Chester City Council's Play Areas in Parished Areas 2007-08 grant. A decision was awaited.

In light of the representations made by Mr Butler before the meeting began, the Council considered the play equipment on the Fiddlers Lane Playing Field and the possibility of providing modern equipment.

RESOLVED:

That the provision of play equipment be discussed at the next meeting of the Council.

(g) Moles

It was noted that the moles could not get through the Tenax Mesh.

125 ACCOUNTS

(a) Payments made since the meeting of the Council held on 4 June 2007:

RESOLVED:

That the following payments be approved:

<u>Financial Year 2007/2008</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>Cheque No</u>
Mr C Moss (goal nets and mole traps - £10 underpaid last month)	10.00	101999
Marshon Court Hotel (deposit for Councillor WI Humphrey's NALC conference hotel – returned – asked to be made Payable to Bournemouth Borough Council instead)	9.80	102000
Mr H Wilkinson (odd jobs)	277.50	102026
Mr H Wilkinson (materials)	85.12	102027
Bournemouth Borough Council (deposit for Councillor WI Humphrey's NALC conference hotel)	9.80	102028
NW Newspapers Ltd (Newsletter distribution)	28.79	102029
Smith of Derby Ltd (VI Clock service)	213.85	102030
Chester City Council (Printing Newsletter)	338.40	102031
Tenax UK Ltd (Mesh)	8,772.55	102032
N+NJ Enterprises Ltd (Laying of mesh)	2,220.75	102033
Mr C Moss (Parish Room rental)	312.50	102034
Mrs S Hudspeth (Salary)	590.69	102035

<u>Financial Year 2007/2008</u>	£	<u>Cheque No</u>
HM Customs and Revenue (Tax and National Insurance)	802.47	102036
Mrs S Hudspeth (Expenses)	72.53	102037
Mr R Hipkiss (June 2007 Street Cleaning)	910.23	102038
All Cheshire Garden Service (Grass Cutting)	1,060.00	102039

(b) Receipts

RESOLVED:

That the following receipts be noted:

	£
Interest to 21 June 2007 (14 Day Interest Account)	244.49
Cheque from Mr JM Tunnicliffe for offcuts of mesh	30.00
Street Cleaning Grant (1 April – 30 September 2007)	2,412.80

(c) Cash to Bank Reconciliation

RESOLVED:

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

(d) Audit of Accounts 2006/07

Mr H Dobson had completed the internal audit of the Council's Accounts for the financial year 2006/07 and had signed them off. After parishioners had been given the statutory right to inspect the Accounts, they would be forwarded to the External Auditors, Hacker Young.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(e) Vernon Institute Clock

It was reported that no response had been received from the Managing Director of Smith and Derby, Architectural Solutions to the Clerk's letters of 14 April and 22 May 2007 regarding the revised agreement in respect of the annual service. It was assumed that he did not want to commit himself.

126 INTERRUPTIONS TO THE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY IN MAY 2007

The Clerk had written to Scottish Power Energy Networks on 13 June 2007 to enquire why the village had encountered power loss on three separate occasions in a two week period.

A reply from Scottish Power dated 19 June 2007 apologised for any inconvenience and disruption caused to the people of Saughall and informed as follows:

18 January 2007 - This was a day of storms – overhead conductors replaced – problem caused by trees which had to be cut back

- 27 April 2007 - Broken disc and pin insulators – vandals suspected
- 3 May 2007 - Bird with a large wingspan managed to get across overhead insulator but the insulator had to be changed as damaged
- 22 May 2007 - suspected third party damage but no proof – had to replace two spans of overhead line

RESOLVED:

That the reasons for the interruptions to the electricity supply be noted.

## 127 PUBLIC FOOTPATHS

The Council considered copies of correspondence received by the Clerk in respect of problems encountered by walkers on local public footpaths.

The Mid-Cheshire Footpath Society had complained about footpath closures but Mr Steve Holden, Cheshire County Council's Public Rights of Way Maintenance and Enforcement Officer, had informed that Side Road Orders had been made to the Secretary of State to enable the A5117 Improvement Scheme to go ahead. The Orders closed lengths of the footpaths and created some new ones. There were problems with the advisory signage but Mr Holden had no power to force the Highway Agency to reword it but he could advise the contractors.

Colleagues of the Clerk had travelled from Southport to walk in Saughall, taking the Overwood Way and the Castle Way detailed in the Parish Footpath Booklet. However, they had complained that the footpath between Hermitage Road and Kingswood Lane was the worst, most overgrown footpath ever seen and everyone had been cut and scratched and clothing damaged.

This problem had been referred to Mr Holden who had informed that the footpath booklet was now ten years old.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the reports be received;
- (2) the Council's Footpath Warden, Mr Tony Leach, be informed of the problems the walkers from Southport encountered; and
- (3) the Parish Footpath Booklet be considered at the next meeting of the Council.

## 128 PARISH COUNCIL SURGERIES

No-one had attended the last Parish Council Surgery held on 2 June 2007 and no-one had attended the Surgery held by PCSO Mike Butler.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor RA Shukla be requested to preside over the next Parish Council Surgery scheduled for Saturday, 4 August 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 6 August 2007.

129 VERNON INSTITUTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (VIMC)

It was noted that the VIMC had decided to carry out work on the library wall and was seeking quotations for this.

It was reported that the date for the switch on of the Christmas Lights needed to be agreed and the Vernon Institute bookings secretary, Mrs S Jones, needed to be informed.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the reports be received; and

(2) the date for the switch on of the Christmas Lights be agreed and communicated to Mrs Jones.

129 ODD JOBS

The following odd jobs were identified for Mr H Wilkinson:

- Boundary stone to be reset
- All village signs to be washed

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to ask Mr Wilkinson to carry out the work identified.

130 ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

(a) Representation at Meetings of Outside Bodies

The Chairman informed that she would not now be going to the Cheshire Association of Local Councils – Chester Area Meeting at 7:30pm on 4 July 2007 at County Hall, Chester.

(b) Reports of Meetings of Outside Bodies attended in the last month

The Council received reports on the proceedings of the following events:

- Cheshire Association of Local Councils information event – Proposed Local Government Reorganisation at 7:00pm on Monday, 11 June 2007 at Winsford Fire Brigade Headquarters
- Review of the Effectiveness of Police Forums at 6:30pm on Wednesday, 13 June at Constabulary Headquarters, Winsford

RESOLVED:

That the reports be received.

131 COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED

- email dated 4 June 2007 from Mr G Bulter (copy attached)

Noted

- letter dated 7 June 2007 from Mr Hergen Haye, Director, Nuclear Public Engagement, Department of Trade and Industry re. Consultation on tackling climate change and securing energy supplies – ends 10 October 2007 (copy attached)

Noted

- letter dated 14 June 2007 from Mr Phil Addison, Rural Housing Enabler, Chester City Council re. Lack of affordable housing (copy attached)

The Clerk would bring Mr Addison up to date and inform him that a response from Northern Affordable Homes Ltd was awaited

132 CIRCULARS

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

Chester City Council – Chester in Bloom leaflets

Chester City Council – Try Something Different, June-September 2007

Standards Board for England – The Code of Conduct – Guide for Members – May 2007

Standards Board for England – The Code of Conduct – Pocket Guide – May 2007

Chester City Council's The Past Uncovered – June 2007

Cheshire County Council's Cheshire Matters – June 2007