

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH
COUNCIL held on 5 October 2009 at the Vernon Institute, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor Mrs K Ford
Councillor DF Holman
Councillor WI Humphrey (Homewatch Coordinator)
Councillor B Kerr
Councillor Mrs J Knox
Councillor RK Shukla
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar
Councillor RA Storrar
Councillor Mrs HL Thorniley-Jones
Councillor A Warrington
Councillor Mrs D Whitton
Councillor Mrs JM Young (in the Chair)

Mr B Salisbury – Internal Auditor

301 APOLOGIES FOR AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Apologies for authorised absence were received from Councillors JG and Mrs J Johnson and from PCSO Mike Butler

302 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

303 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the following amendments, the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 7 September 2009 be confirmed as a correct record.

Minute No 198 – Parish Council Surgeries

Replace 5 September with 3 October.

304 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

It was noted that the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting that had been scheduled for 24 September 2009 had not gone ahead because it had been inquorate.

305 PARISH COUNCIL SURGERIES

(a) Surgery held on 3 October 2009

Councillor Mrs J Knox had presided over the Surgery held on Saturday, 3 October 2009 between 10:00am and 10:45am outside the Co-op Store. Issues discussed had included:

- the inadequacies of the incoming bus stop and its sign opposite Aspen Grove on Hermitage Road
- playing badminton at the Vernon Institute
- speeding on Seahill Road
- possible parking issues at the new All Saints Primary School
- The future of the “Church Hall” at the Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School
- Dog bin needed on Hermitage Road
- A coach parked outside the Greyhound Public House on double yellow lines

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Councillor Mrs J Knox be thanked for her report;
- (2) the Clerk be requested to contact Kieran Collins of Cheshire West and Chester Council to request that his Council considers acquiring land in order to make the bus stop opposite Aspen Grove on Hermitage Road more satisfactory and also ask that the vegetation is cut back as an interim measure; and
- (3) the Clerk be requested to contact Cheshire West and Chester Council’s Dog Warden, David Wood and ask if it is possible for him to site a dog bin on Hermitage Road by the junction of Meadows Lane.

(b) Surgery on 31 October 2009

RESOLVED:

That Councillor DF Holman be requested to preside over the next Parish Council Surgery to be held between 10:00am and 10:45am on Saturday, 31 October 2009 outside of the Co-op Stores.

306 THE HOMEWATCH SCHEME – PRESENTATION

The Council noted that Liz Biddle, Cheshire Constabulary’s Homewatch Officer, had been invited to the meeting to make a presentation. She had been unable to attend but had agreed to make her presentation at the rescheduled Council meeting on Monday, 9 November 2009 instead.

307 POLICE/HOMEWATCH

(a) Police

PCSO Mike Butler had been unable to attend the meeting and had sent his apologies for absence along with a written report covering the time period since the last Council meeting on 7 September 2009. The report detailed the following issues:

- Burglaries (bicycles and fishing equipment)
- Thefts from vehicles
- Trailer stolen from Hermitage Road
- Cash in transit robbery at the Little Chef on Parkgate Road
- Anti-social behaviour
- Criminal damage
- Under age drinking and confiscation of alcohol
- Arrangements for Police Surgeries on 8 and 29 October, 19 November and 10 December 2009
- Speeding traffic through the village
- Temporary arrangements with the Chester District Housing Trust for parents to use the Wain House car park to alleviate traffic problems at the Ridings Community Infant School
- Free bicycle marking day at the Uniform Groups' Headquarters on Saturday, 10 October 2009 between 1:00am and 3:00pm

RESOLVED:

That the PCSO's report be received.

(b) Homewatch

Councillor WI Humphrey, in his capacity as Homewatch Co-ordinator, detailed low level crime and anti-social activity that had taken place over the last month in the village and any actions taken as a result. Matters included:

- Youths drinking on Church Road
- Street Cleaner clearing away empty bottles from around the Uniform Groups' Headquarters in the Golden Jubilee Park

It was also noted that the bus shelter in Little Saughall had been vandalised and was repaired the very next day.

RESOLVED:

That the Homewatch Coordinator's report be received.

(c) Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) Scheme

It was noted that the Clerk had consulted parishioners, via the September 2009 Newsletter, on the proposal to agree a further PCSO Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Cheshire Constabulary when the current agreement ended on 31 March 2010.

Currently, the SLA with the Police covered a three-year period from 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2010 at a cost of £11,000 per annum. If the Council committed itself to subsidising a PCSO for Saughall for a further three years, it had been informed that it would cost £12,700 per annum. This would have to be financed through the parish precept if the Council was unable to access grant aid.

The Clerk had asked parishioners whether or not they considered that the 'police presence' had been improved in the village and if they felt that the use of a PCSO had resolved issues of concern, and, in particular, anti-social behaviour and had altered perceptions, reducing parishioner's fear of crime. Comments had been requested by 30 September 2009 but no one had made any.

Concerns were raised that PCSOs had been allowed to put their own interpretation on the job and that there was no standardisation between areas. Members were unable to contact PCSOs when they were on the beat and cover at weekends was often an issue.

However, after substantial deliberation it was agreed that the PCSO Scheme was on the whole a good, worthwhile initiative. There was a feel good factor associated with it and parishioners felt safer in Saughall as a consequence. Parishioners now expected the level of community safety they were currently experiencing.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) agreement be given, in principle, to sign up to the new PCSO Scheme that will run from 1 April 2010 for a further three years;
- (2) budgetary provision for the PCSO Scheme be included in the budget for 2010/11 at the Council's Budget meeting in January 2010 and any identified funding opportunities be fully exploited in an attempt to secure grants to help fund the Council's financial contribution to the Scheme; and
- (3) dialogue be entered into, as soon as possible, with the new Neighbourhood Inspector in an attempt to secure a more realistic financial contribution in relation to the PCSO Scheme for this Council.

308 ANNUAL AUDIT – RISK MANAGEMENT

RESOLVED:

That this item be deferred to the next Council meeting scheduled for Monday, 9 November 2009.

309 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE PARISH PLAN

The Council reviewed progress on activities arising from the Parish Plan consulting the most recent Action List.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to revise the Action List in the light of Members' comments and suggestions and append it to the Minutes. (Appendix A)

310 GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK

(a) Probation Service – Community Payback Scheme

The Chairman reported that workers on the scheme had been to Saughall four times for four hour periods. They had been engaged in cutting vegetation back around the Uniform Groups' Headquarters and planting daffodil bulbs. They would continue to visit until they had completed all of the work assigned to them.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(b) Quarterly Operational Inspection Report – August 2009

The Field Committee would consider the Quarterly Operational Inspection Report but would not meet until all of the work being undertaken involving the Community Payback Scheme had been completed. The urgent actions previously identified in the Report had all been undertaken (Minute No 295(d)/2009 refers).

RESOLVED:

That the position be noted.

(c) Fiddlers Lane Car Park – Drainage

The drainage work had been completed. The turf that had died had been replaced with grass seed. When it rained the Council would be able to ascertain whether the new drainage was successful.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(d) Perimeter Path

It was noted that grass was growing on the perimeter path. Sodium chloride weed killer was to be applied at the far side where the seats used to be.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

(e) Painting of Play Equipment and Cheshire Railings

The play equipment had been painted. One quotation had been received for sanding down and repainting the Cheshire Railings.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the report be received; and

(2) a further quotation be sought from the Probation Services' Community Payback Scheme to sand down and repaint the Cheshire Railings.

(f) Multi-Play Unit

Consideration would be given to replacing the multi-play unit when the Council set its 2010/11 budget. In the meantime, the state of existing one would be monitored.

(g) New Gates and Posts

Further quotations where awaited.

(h) CCTV Equipment

It was reported that PCSO Mike Butler was investigating the possibility on improving the number of days of camera footage that was currently stored. PCSO Butler would be asked to train Members on how to view the footage before he left his post to take up his new police constable position early next year.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

(i) Park Benches

The ground was currently too hard to install the park benches. This work would be done after there was some rain fall.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

(j) Playnet Repairs

The Council received a quotation in the sum of £85 to repair the playnet from Keith Pilgrim.

RESOLVED:

That Mr Pilgrim be requested to carry out the repairs as detailed in his quotation.

(k) Insurance Claim

RESOLVED:

That in the light of (j) above the Council will not claim for repairs through its insurance and its Insurance Company, Allianz Cornhill be informed that the reason for the delay in informing it of the damage was that the Council was awaiting quotations to determine whether it would need to claim off its insurance or not.

(l) Signage - Parish Council and No Dogs and No Golf

Mr Pilgrim had also provided quotations for additional signage required in the Golden Jubilee Park. He informed that the expensive option was to provide two signs engraved (blue background, white lettering). These were in hard plastic and mounted on a stainless steel backing plate in the case of the No Dogs/No Golf signs. The second cheaper option in the same colours was for the notices to be made up in plastic lettering. This, however, could be peeled off and was likely to be vandalised. The Parish Council sign could be screwed directly to the door.

The restriction notice signs would cost £130 fitted to the existing fencing. The alternative cheaper option would cost £65.

RESOLVED:

That Mr Pilgrim be requested to go ahead with the more expensive option of the signage work detailed above.

311 ACCOUNTS

(a) Accounts 2008/09

The Internal Auditor, Mr Bob Salisbury, detailed his background and apologised for the delay in completing his first internal audit. He had discussed a couple of small issues with the Clerk and was now in a position to sign off the 2008/09 Accounts. They would now be forwarded to the External Auditor, Jackie Bellard of the Audit Commission for her consideration.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

(b) Mid-Year Review of the 2009/10 Budget

The Council undertook its mid-year review of the budget and noted its current financial position and its expected expenditure up to 31 March 2010.

RESOLVED:

That the mid-year budgetary position and expected expenditure to the 31 March 2010 be noted.

(c) Local Government Pay Settlement 2009

RESOLVED:

That the detail of the Local Government Pay Settlement 2009 be noted and the Clerk's new pay scales be awaited.

(d) Payments made since the meeting of the Council held on 5 October 2009:

RESOLVED:

That the following payments be approved:

<u>Financial Year 2009/2010</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>Cheque No</u>
Morrall Play Solutions (Play equipment inspections)	112.12	102292
NWN Media Ltd (Newsletter distribution)	28.18	102293
All Cheshire Garden Services	700.00	102294
Mrs S Hudspeth (Expenses)	54.40	102295
HM Revenue and Customs	781.02	102296
Mrs S Hudspeth (Salary)	640.98	102297
Mr R Hipkiss (Litter Picking)	1,007.67	102298
Mr Paul Edwards (Drainage work)	907.00	102299

(e) Receipts

RESOLVED:

That the following receipts be noted:

	<u>£</u>
Interest on 14 Day Interest Account to 21 September 2009	0.51

(f) Cash to Bank Reconciliation and Golden Jubilee Park Development Fund Reconciliation

RESOLVED:

That the contents be noted.

312 YOUTH ISSUES

Councillor WI Humphrey reported on the proceedings of the Youth Club meeting held on 14 September 2009. Matters discussed included obtaining a quotation to provide a new entrance onto the patio and obtaining a fire certificate. The Club's bank balance had also been noted. The Club would pack bags at Morrisons on two occasions before Christmas as part of its fund raising activities.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

313 THE NEW SCHOOL AND THE FUTURE OF THE INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOL BUILDINGS

(a) All Saints Primary School

Councillor RA Storrar reported that the building work was on schedule and the new School would open on Monday, 2 November 2009.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(b) Future of the Ridings Community Infant School Building

Councillor DF Holman had written to all Members of the Council on 24 September 2009 regarding the possible acquisition of the Ridings Community Infant School building at a low cost. He had collated information provided by Judith Davies, the Headteacher, which he had summarised as follows:

"The Building and Grounds:

1. The building is approximately 29m x 34m, 980m². Usable internal area for activities will be around 900m². The land plot is something like 70m x 90m and includes parking and a pond.
2. Fabric of the building – general state of repair is very good. Some ceiling tiles are misshapen and discoloured because of leaks but otherwise the only concern would be the roof which is flat, has had a lot of work done to it over the years, but is now considered sound. There are no 'known' or 'anticipated' problems in the short term.
3. Contents of building – carpets are 6 years old but in good condition; general decoration is good. Has a feel of being well looked after.
4. The building has excellent disabled access throughout.
5. Grounds – have been kept in good and tidy condition. Note: Great Crested Newts are on site. The fenced pond is not retaining water except in wet weather nowadays. The plants and

most stone will be removed from the memorial garden. The play equipment is going to the new School.

6. There is a special soft 'floatex' carpet in the Hall which is 'easily cleaned' (they use it for dining) and is good for playing games. The inner courtyard, which is half covered for inclement weather, has a soft spongy/rubbery surface for children to play on.
7. The heating system is Gas, 8 years old, and with a 25 year life expectation. There are three hot water tanks of which two are currently out of circuit as not being needed.
8. Toilets – most are of 'young child' size and that are very few adult size.
9. Asbestos – there is none in the building except for a couple of small painted panels by the front door in place of windows. This has been verified independently.
10. Kitchens – all steel units will be removed for location elsewhere, but power and gas supplies and some work surfaces will be left.
11. Alarm System – will certainly be left to protect the building. It calls a 24 hour response service.
12. It is thought that a number of data projectors and interactive whiteboards will be left behind. Also various cupboards, shelving, etc. The building is wired throughout for internet access.

Costs P.A. (last year's figures):

- | | |
|----------------|--------|
| 1. Electricity | £1,854 |
| 2. Gas | £2,489 |
| 3. Oil | £0 |
| 4. Water/waste | £2,512 |
| 5. Rates | £4,300 |

Councillor Holman had gone on to inform that the main questions, for Members and other interested parties, to consider were:

- Who could/would be the users of the site and building if the Council was to acquire it; and
- Would these uses be able to meet the running costs of the building and site which he estimated to be approximately £43,000 per annum?"

Councillor Holman had requested comments/observations as soon as possible and it had been noted that the keys for the School would be returned to Cheshire West and Chester Council on 2 November 2009.

It did not appear that there was anyone interested in running the School building for community use.

Councillor RA Storrar declared a personal interest in this matter by virtue of him also being a Cheshire West and Chester Councillor.

Councillor B Kerr informed that it was necessary for the Parish Council to demonstrate that the building would be properly used and managed and find activities to keep the building occupied.

RESOLVED: That

(1) Members contact anyone they considered may be interested in locating to the School and pass any subsequent information on to Councillor Holman; and

(2) Councillor Holman be requested, in the light of (1) above, to bring a further report to the next meeting of the Council.

(c) Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School – Two Events to Celebrate the Life of the Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School

The Vicar, Rev Brian Harris, on 19 September 2009 had written to former staff, pupils, governors, friends and all Members of the Parish Council as the School was closing at the end of October 2009 after over 150 years of providing education and much more to the children of Saughall and Shotwick Park. He had informed that to celebrate the life of the School before it closed there would be two events that recipients of the letter were invited to as follows:

- On Thursday, 1 October 2009 - a special service of Thanksgiving that begun at 6:30pm and involved pupils from the School and a harvest theme celebrating the “fruits” of the School’s life over its history.
- On Sunday, 3 October 2009 – an Open Day in School from 10:30am to 2:30pm that included an exhibition of items of interest, photographs, etc.

Consequently, some Members of the Council had attended these events.

(d) The Proposal to Use the “Church Hall” for Community Use

The Chairman reported that she had spoken to the Vicar, Rev Harris, and been informed that there had been no progress made on this matter.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

314 LOCAL SERVICE DELIVERY UNDER CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER COUNCIL

Alison Armstrong, Cheshire West and Chester Council's LSP Director, had not yet provided the notes of the meeting held on 7 September 2009 she had promised at the last Council meeting (Minute No 293/2009 refers).

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to contact Ms Armstrong and ascertain if she was now in a position to consult on her notes.

315 HIGHWAY ISSUES

(a) Parked Cars on Pavements

There were still problem areas which would be kept under observation.

(b) Speeding Traffic and the Proposal for Saughall to be designated a Community Speed Watch Area

Members had used the speed gun in the last few days.

Councillor RA Storrar reported that Councillor Eddie Jenkins of Puddington and District Council was raising concerns over the speed limit on the A540 – The Parkgate Road. Councillor Jenkins was hoping that neighbouring Parish Councils would support him in his actions to try to get Cheshire West and Chester Council to reassess the situation with a view to reducing the speed limit to 40 mph.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to arrange a meeting, as soon as possible, between representatives of this Council and those of Puddington and District and Mollington Parish Councils to discuss a proposal to request Cheshire West and Chester Council to review the speed limit on the A540 – The Parkgate Road.

(c) Bus Services in Saughall

Members were now happy with the bus services in Saughall.

RESOLVED:

That the bus services be no longer included on the agenda for Parish Council meetings as a standard item.

(d) Potholes and a Meeting with Cheshire West and Chester Council Officers to Discuss Highway Issues

Members reported that the road at the junction of the Ridings and Rakeway was in a terrible state of disrepair.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to bring the state of the above mentioned road junction to the attention of Kieran Collins of Cheshire West and Chester Council's Highway Department.

(e) Kingswood Lane – Proposed Traffic Prevention Order

There had been no progress to report.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed Traffic Prevention Order be included on the agenda for the next meeting of the Council.

(f) Bus Stop at the Peg

It was reported that the situation had calmed down a little.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk continue to put this item on the agenda for future Council meetings.

(g) Junction of A540/Long Lane – Visibility Issues

It was reported that there had been little improvement and the hedge had not been cut.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to remind Kieran Collins of Cheshire West and Chester Council's Highways Department to take the appropriate action.

(h) Lodge Lane/Long Lane Junction – Visibility Issues

It was noted that there had been a slight improvement but that there was still a lot of trees and bushes that could be cut back.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to remind Kieran Collins of Cheshire West and Chester Council's Highways Department to take the appropriate action.

(i) A5117 Access

It was reported that motorists were still using the access by Shotwick Bridge previously used by Carillion.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to remind Kieran Collins of Cheshire West and Chester Council's Highways Department to take the appropriate action.

(j) The Riding of Bicycles on Church Road Pavements

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Mrs HL Thorniley-Jones be requested to ask the Headteacher of the Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School to remind her pupils to give way to pedestrians.

316 REDEVELOPMENT OF WAIN HOUSE

There was no progress to report. The redevelopment would be kept on the agenda for the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

317 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH-ON

The Chairman reported that Councillor Mrs Johnson was pleased with progress being made and arrangements were going to plan.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

318 ELECTORAL REVIEW OF THE NEW CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER UNITARY AUTHORITY

There was no progress to report. The Electoral Review would be kept on the agenda for the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

319 ODD JOBS

There were no odd jobs to be done at the present time.

320 VERNON INSTITUTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (VIMC)

Councillor Mrs JM Young informed that the VIMC was currently focused on arrangements to rent No 1 Cottage. It was also noted that an issue had arisen over the need for a key to be provided so access to the outside courtyard could be achieved.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

321 ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

(a) Outside Meetings Coming Up

- (i) Cheshire Association of Local Councils – Annual Meeting 2009
Tuesday, 22 October 2009, 6-9:30pm at Middlewich Civic Hall

Councillors WI Humphrey, B Kerr and A Warrington would attend as Councillor Mrs JM Young informed that she was now unable to attend.

- (ii) Overview and Scrutiny Committee
8 October 2009, 6:30pm at Helsby Community Centre, Lower Robin Hood Lane, Helsby, Frodsham, WA6 0BW

No one was able to attend this meeting

(b) Outside Meetings that had taken place

- (i) PCSO Liaison Meeting
Monday, 7 September 2009

Councillor WI Humphrey provided the Council with a comprehensive report on the proceedings of the PCSO Liaison Meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

- (ii) Mickle Trafford Community Forum
Wednesday, 9 September 2009 between 6:30pm and 9:00pm at the former Dunham Hill Primary School, Village Road, Dunham, WA6 0LX

Councillor RA Storrar provided the Council with a brief report on the proceedings of the Mickle Trafford Community Forum. It was noted that the attendance had been poor.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the report be received; and

(2) the Clerk be requested to obtain the dates of meetings for the remainder of the Municipal Year from Rob Callow, Area Manager Rural West, Cheshire West and Chester Council.

That the report be received.

322 COMMUNICATION RECEIVED

The following communication had been received:

- The Clerk had received an email on 30 September 2009 from Bob Rudd on behalf of Christine Russell MP. Mr Rudd had been asked to contact the Clerk by Ms Russell to say what an excellent Parish Newsletter she had just been reading that had been circulated in Saughall. She thought that it would be a good way to advertise one of her community surgeries. Therefore, Mr Rudd requested to know when the next edition would be published so he could book the Vernon Institute and hold a surgery.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to liaise with Mr Rudd over the publication of the next Parish Newsletter in December 2009.

323 CIRCULARS

The following circular had been received. Anyone requiring a copy would contact the Clerk.

Exhibitions and Events in Chester – October 2009 – January 2010