

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH COUNCIL held on Tuesday, 20 October 2015 at the Vernon Institute, Church Road, Saughall.

In attendance: Councillor Ms M Collins
Councillor Mrs K Ford
Councillor H Jennings (Part – Left at 6:30pm)
Councillor Mrs J O'Malley
Councillor Ms A Manning (Part – Left at 6:30pm)
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar
Councillor A Warrington
Councillor D Whitton
Councillor Mrs JM Young
Councillor PP Young

Mr Brian Huxley, Chairman of the Saughall Community and Sports Pavilion Committee.

Ms Fiona Huyton, Landscape Artist, Cheshire West and Chester Council.

Ms Mary Lavery, Total Environment, Green Infrastructure Officer, Cheshire West and Chester Council.

Apologies for Absence: Councillors A Bailey and Mrs J Knox.

182. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs JE Storrar declared a personal interest by virtue of her being a member of the Saughall Community and Sports Pavilion Committee.

183. GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK

(a) Improving the Play and Leisure Offer in the Park

The Council had regard to the draft Landscape Master Plan Consultation Document prepared by the Officers from Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC). It contained possible options as a starting point and Members were aware that amendments could be made so that the Council would be able to agree a Landscape Plan which, once implemented, would improve the play and leisure offer in the Golden Jubilee Park.

Members were informed that in order to draw up the draft Plan, the CWaC Officers had carried out an analysis of the whole site and the opportunities it presented as well as the site constraints had been taken into account.

As a result, two alternative designs had been produced. The aim was to create a strong social hub for the local community and to improve the functionality of the area, using what was available e.g. the ponds. Provision for cycles and seating and increased parking and greater accessibility had all been considered.

The Council noted that safety had been highlighted as an issue as people moved around the area, on foot and in vehicles and the conflicts they created needed to be looked at. Also, a number of different village organisations used the site and consideration needed to be given to how these could collaborate in order to enhance funding opportunities.

The Council remembered and discussed issues that had been overcome when the land adjacent to the Swing Park had been purchased and developed, including the requirement following, an ecological study, to dig out an additional pond to enhance the habitat of Great Crested Newts.

The following resolution was moved and seconded and it was

RESOLVED:

That the Council's Standing Orders be suspended so that Mr Brian Huxley is able to join in the discussion.

The Council had regard to the draft Master Plan Options 1 and 2 and Mr Huxley pointed out an inaccuracy in that the Cricket Pavilion was named on the Plan but in actual fact the building was the Uniformed Group's Headquarters.

Mr Huxley informed that

- The Cricket Square had been created and was of good quality.
- Historically, Senior Football had been an issue but Junior Football had not been such an issue.
- Provision of Bowling Greens was dependent on a Club being formed.
- Without a Community and Sports Pavilion there would be a gap in provision. Also, the ownership of the proposed Pavilion to be built on land in the Council's ownership would belong to the Council but it had been presumed, by some, that it would belong to the Saughall Community and Sports Pavilion Committee.
- The proposed Car Park could be disastrous.
- It was important that the Cricket Pitch remained in the centre of the site.
- There was room for three/four Junior Football Pitches on the site.

Members then drew attention to the following:

- The provision of Football Pitches just over the Saughall border in Wales affected funding.
- It would be nice to see access to the ponds being maintained and included in the Plan. They could be used by the School for children's activities but there were also health and safety concerns associated with this idea and the risks would need to be assessed.
- There had previously been a perimeter path around the Golden Jubilee Park but there had not been funding in place for it to be maintained.
- A BMX Track could be included in the Plan.

- The safety of the children was paramount.
- The draft Plan did not have enough emphasis on the Play Area. The Council had funding to improve this area.

However, Members were reminded that the Plans had been presented to kick-start the discussion and consultation. There would be a focus on the Play Area and children would be included in the consultation that was to take place.

- Some of the work had already been carried out and there was a concern about the amount of time the project was taking.
- Play had been designed so that all children could be supervised at once.
- Once the Pavilion was built in the Park, hopefully, supervision in the Park would be enhanced.
- Natural Play would be beneficial but there were concerns about this activity alongside the ponds.
- The Emily Ffion Trust wanted to fund a piece of play equipment in the Park.
- An orchard (Apple Trees) could be planted in the Park.
- Picnic tables had been in use in the Park previously but they had been vandalised.
- The inclusion of an Outdoor Gym in the Plan should be considered.
- It would be helpful to see if another entrance/exit to the Park could be used later, rather than sharing one with pedestrians. Access to the Car Park needed to be revisited.
- If the necessary grant aid for the Community and Sports Pavilion was not achieved and the Pavilion was included in the Plan, what would happen? It was suggested that the Plan could be shown in stages to include the Uniformed Groups' Headquarters until there was funding in place to build the Pavilion.
- An 'Ecology Classroom' was a good idea and funding would need to be sought.
- There was a risk regarding footballs escaping from the Multi-Use Games Area and hitting someone in the Park.
- It would be necessary to consider the number of children who used the play area compared to Cricketers etc. during the forthcoming consultation. It was known that parents did need to supervise different age groups at the same time. It was important to minimise risks and the Council's insurance company could be asked for its views.
- The consultation exercise needed to be tailored to ensure that the Council was aware of what was required in the local community.

CWaC Officers informed the Council that they would go away and discuss the Plan further in the light of the feedback they had received at this meeting.

Standing Orders back in force.

(b) Sports England's Protected Playing Fields Funding

Information regarding the £33 million of National Lottery funding to improve community sports fields had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

Councillor Mrs K Ford informed that the Council met the assessment criteria in respect of Sports England funding but that the latest funding round closed later in the week.

Councillor Mrs K Ford also informed that Tesco had launched a scheme for community grants that the Council could bid for to improve the ponds. The funding round closed on 27 November 2015.

A discussion then ensued on the subjects of possible grant applications and it was

RESOLVED:

That quotes be obtained for outdoor gym equipment.

(c) Children's Play Area – Annual Inspection on Saturday, 8 August 2015

The Annual Inspection of the Children's Play Equipment located in the Golden Jubilee Park had been carried out on the morning of Saturday, 8 August 2015 and the External Inspector's Report had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

Members considered issues the Inspector had identified with the Ariel Runway (which were in hand), the access gate that was rusty and needed repair, the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) (which had been brought to the attention of the contractor as the MUGA was still under guarantee) but it was also noted that there were no warning signs evident around the MUGA and that the Inspector had recommended that some should be installed.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the content of the Annual Play Area Inspection Report be noted; and

(2) quotations be obtained to install warning signs on the MUGA.

(d) Proposed Operational Inspections

Councillor Mrs K Ford asked the Council to consider whether more children's play equipment inspections should be carried out each year in the Golden Jubilee Park. The Inspector had informed that each visit would cost £45.

RESOLVED:

That play equipment inspections be carried out by the External Inspector in the Golden Jubilee Park, every four months.

- (e) The Field Committee's Monthly Report on Maintenance Issues etc.

Councillor Mrs JM Young was of the opinion that no action was being taken following Field Committee meetings. However, Councillor Mrs K Ford reported that this was certainly not the case and relevant contractors etc. had been contacted a number of times regarding the work required in respect of all issues that had been raised by the Committee.

Councillor Mrs JM Young informed that the Field Committee would continue to meet but it wanted actions to be taken.

- (f) The Proposal to build a Community and Sports Pavilion

The Council was reminded that at its meeting on 2 February 2015 it had been recorded in the Minutes among other things that:

'It was noted that the Sports and Community Use Building once completed would be owned by the Parish Council.'

It had been

'RESOLVED:

That the position be noted.'

(Minute No. 32(b) refers)

Councillor Mrs K Ford informed that the planning application had been submitted in the Parish Council's name, the proposed Pavilion would be for the local community's use and public money had been invested in the project.

However, Councillor Mrs JE Storrar's view was that the £6,000 allocated to this project by the Council was a modest donation and that the planning application had been submitted by the Council to save money.

Councillor PP Young informed that alternative ways to get the project of the ground had been explored, including the possibility of the Saughall Community and Sports Pavilion Committee obtaining charitable status.

Members were asked to consider whether the Council wanted to be that involved in the fundraising or the running of the Pavilion once built. The Council noted that an option would be that a Joint Use Agreement could be investigated.

Councillor A Warrington proposed that Members of the Council should work together towards the same objectives. Accessing funding would

depend on who owned the land that the Pavilion was to be built upon and who would own the building.

Councillor Mrs K Ford informed that it would be appropriate to defer any further consideration of this item of business as the Council would need to seek legal advice before agreeing how to proceed. Also, there were other issues that would require consideration e.g. attracting external funding.

The Council noted that, as a charity, the Saughall Community and Sports Pavilion Committee would be able to approach a lot more grant providers than at present but would only be able to do this if it would own the building once it was built. Therefore, one option, to move this project forward, was to put the project in the hands of the Saughall Community and Sports Pavilion Committee but this created a difficulty for the Council as it had allocated £6,000 from its budget to this project.

Councillor Mrs K Ford informed that if the Saughall Community and Sports Pavilion Committee was unsuccessful in its funding application to Sport England, it would have a £400,000 shortfall. She informed that this whole matter was a legal minefield and the Council needed to ensure that it obtained value for money. Everyone wanted to see the project brought to fruition and the Parish Council would be able to access various funding opportunities that the Saughall Community and Sports Pavilion Committee was unable access. The approximate cost of the new build was in the region of £450,000.

It was noted that the planning permission had been for a three year period which meant a decision on the way forward needed to be made by January 2016. The Architect would cost £25,000 and £10,000 had been paid so far. There were other specialists who needed to be paid which could be met from the Saughall Community and Sports Pavilion Committee's funds. Moving forward it would seem that the sensible option was for the Parish Council to take on the fund raising for the project.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) that consideration of this item of business be deferred pending appropriate legal advice being obtained; and**
- (2) the Clerk be requested to obtain the legal advice referred to at (1) above from the National Association of Local Councils via the Cheshire Association of Local Councils.**

(g) Smoke Free Playgrounds

The Council considered a Member Briefing Note from Cheshire West and Chester Council which was attached to the agenda for the meeting. The closing date for responses to the consultation had been 4 September 2015. Members were asked to note that the Clerk had responded as follows:

'Members are disappointed that there is a charge to a Parish Council. Surely, CWAC residents should be treated equally across the Borough and residents that are in parished areas may miss out on a Health Initiative due to there being a charge. Why should a Parish Council have to pay for an initiative that CWAC is rolling out?

The Parish Council, however, does think this is a good initiative.'

RESOLVED:

That the response to the consultation exercise that the Clerk has sent be noted.

184. URGENT BUSINESS - SCOUTS – 'BOB A JOB' WEEK

It was reported that the Scouts were willing to plant bulbs around the village during 'Bob a Job' week, if the Council would contribute to the cost of them. Due to the timescale this matter was urgent and the decision on it could not await the next scheduled meeting of the Council on Monday, 2 November 2015.

RESOLVED:

That this Council will provide a financial contribution, not exceeding £100, for spring bulbs for the Scouts to plant in the village during 'Bob a Job' Week.