

MINUTES OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK'S ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held on 23 April 2018 at the Vernon Institute, Church Road, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor A Bailey
Councillor M Johnson
Councillor B Kerr
Councillors Mrs J Knox
Councillor Ms A Manning
Councillor A Warrington
Councillor Mrs JM Young
Councillor PP Young (in the Chair)

and 1 parishioner as listed in the attendance register.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors DF Holman, H Jennings, Ms A Manning and Councillor Mrs JE Storrar.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of Saughall and Shotwick Park's Parish Meeting held on 24 April 2017 be confirmed as a correct record.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

The Chairman welcomed everyone 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 ongoing initiatives, progress made and the Council's aims and aspirations for the future.

Various issues were highlighted and considered in detail. The report was presented as follows:

'Your Parish Council exists to represent and work in the interests of everyone in Saughall and Shotwick Park. To be effective we need to tell you what we are doing and to seek your views and at times your help and participation. My Annual Report provides you with a summary of our activities during the 2017-18 Municipal Year and includes budgetary information. It also sets out details of the Councillors and the Clerk.

Planning

As a statutory consultee we have been asked for comments about over 20 planning applications over the year. We spent most time considering the application for the development of the Pear Tree Farm site. The

Council is pleased that this site could be tidied up and developed as it has been an 'eyesore' and derelict for a long time. However, the Council did express a number of concerns. The first planning application was turned down by Cheshire West and Chester Council, the planning authority, and it has recently been resubmitted.

Policing

We continue to be well served by our PCSO Wendy Leason. She fits in well with village life and is doing a good job. We receive monthly crime reports. I would like to thank Wendy and PC Rob Brown for their valuable contributions to the reduction of crime and disorder and the promotion of public reassurance in the village. We were pleased with their prompt action in responding to some anti-social behaviour that was reported in the Woods last summer.

Public Footpaths in Saughall

In the Parish of Saughall we have over nine miles of footpaths. Working with Cheshire West and Chester Council, who own most of the land we agreed to ensure that all these paths will become Public Rights of Way rather than Permissive Paths and, therefore, protecting them against any future new owners who do not wish them to be used as such.

Children's Play Area

On 24 March the new play area on the Golden Jubilee Park was officially opened by the Lord Mayor of Chester, Councillor Razia Daniels and the Chester MP Chris Matheson. The work on the site had taken a long time to plan with much consultation with young people and residents. Thanks go to Councillor Mrs Jenny Young and the children from our Primary School who helped organise the opening event which was a great success. We are now making plans to build a scooter/cycle track for the older children.

Village Amenities

For last Christmas it was decided to hire a further twelve Christmas garlands for the lamp posts in Church Road. We have now entered into a three year hire contract. They were a welcome addition and were well received by most residents. Recently, Councillor Anna Manning received permission from Cheshire West and Chester Council to place two flower tubs at the junction of Church Road and Saughall Hey. As a result of comments from villagers we are now looking for further places to purchase and place, perhaps larger tubs around the village.

Willow Hey Drainage Issues

As residents of this area know we organised, with the help of our MP Chris Matheson, a public meeting in October 2017 between representatives from Morris Homes, Welsh Water and the Chief

Executive of Cheshire West and Chester Council to discuss this on-going problem. (To which the Parish Council had alerted planners before any building work took place on this site.) Subsequent to that meeting we have been told that a costed solution has been agreed which will be worked on in the summer months. We continue to monitor the situation.

Village Organisations

We continue to support local groups and organisations who contribute so much to village life. We have made the following donations during the year; £4000 to the Pre-school group, £4000 to All Saints Church for their kitchen extension needed for the growing support to their Soup and Pudding Club. We gave £1000 to the Co-op Store to help them purchase a defibrillator that will be placed outside the shop. A small donation was given to the Saughall Friday Club. I was pleased to represent the Parish Council at the Induction of new Vicar Rev Steve Mansfield at the All Saints Parish Church on 22 March.

Vernon Institute

The Vernon Institute continues to play an important part in village life. There will be some major refurbishment and restoration work completed on the building this summer. The clock tower and Hermitage Road side of the building will be re-rendered with wood and window replacements. The trustees have been awarded a grant of £56,700 from Wren and the Parish Council have agreed a donation of £10,000 towards this building project. The Parish Council does have responsibility for the clock tower which, as you will know, is the village's War Memorial. It should be noted for this work will take place at the end of Hermitage Road as it meets Church Road and the road will have to be closed for up to a month.

Neighbourhood Management Team

We are pleased to support this team that takes action to solve problems within the community and works to improve the local environment and quality of life. It arranges and runs the popular summer play school in the village. It has organised the Music in the Park events and this year is organising a Scarecrow Competition. Thank you to all the team members for all their efforts, which have made a real difference here in Saughall.

Remembrance Sunday

It was good that we were able to meet as a village to remember those fallen at the village War Memorial on Sunday, 12 November 2017. Thanks to all those who helped organise this Parish Council event. I had the honour of laying a poppy wreath on behalf of the Council.

Parish Council Working Groups

Increasingly it is the Working Groups, made up of Councillors and in some cases other residents that come up with recommendations for action by the Council.

Business Planning Group – this group revises and updates the Councils Business Plan and Action Plan. It suggests priorities and monitors progress. (Documents are available on our website.) This year it has approved a different approach to how we conduct business, which will be implemented in the next Municipal Year. We hope that these changes will make the Council more efficient and effective.

Communications Working Group – this Group has arranged for our quarterly Newsletter to be published in the Mollington & Saughall Handbook. Any feedback on this development will be appreciated. New noticeboards have been erected in the village. The Council has recently adopted a Social Media Policy and has discussed the new General Data Protection Regulations. We continue to use the Facebook pages available to us but it is deemed not necessary at this time to have our own page.

Traffic Working Group – There is a growing concern in the village about the perceived increase in traffic and its speed through the village. This Group is attempting to draw up a road safety strategy and has had discussions with Cheshire West and Chester Council over a number of suggestions. We do need to gather people's experiences to formulate the right policy for the future. It was following discussions with the Police that this Group secured the establishment of a permanent Police Bay at the Peg for the occasional use of a Police speed enforcement van.

Field Inspection Group – this Group carries out the maintenance and development of the Golden Jubilee Park, an important community facility. This last year it has been responsible for the re-development of the new Children's Play Area as well as the planting of a number of young trees and the establishment of a Local Wildlife Project.

Bus service 15/15a

Since the new Bus Interchange was opened in town we have received many complaints about cancellations and delays to the bus service. We have followed these up with Arriva and Stagecoach and Cheshire West and Chester Council. It would seem that the service has settled down and we now have a service that is reliable. We must emphasise though the old statement 'use it or lose it'.

Finance

The Council has set the Council Budget for 2018/19 at £91,105. Cheshire West and Chester Council has provided the parish precept required which is £64,238 less the Council Tax reduction grant of

£2.126. This means that for another year, there has been no increase in the Parish Tax requirement.

Parish Surgery

We have continued to have regular Parish Surgeries, usually at the Co-op Store in order to engage openly with local people and receive their views and feedback on village matters.

Thanks

As you can see from this report the Council has had a very busy year and I would like to thank Parish Councillors for the time and effort they have devoted to their duties. They do this on a purely voluntary basis. I would like to thank Brian Crowe our Cheshire West and Chester Council Local Ward Member for keeping us up to date with what is happening at Borough level and for all his hard work. He, together with Parish Councillors, focus on the standard and quality of services Cheshire West and Chester Council delivers to our residents. Thanks to Helen Cakebread for her work as our Tree and Environmental Warden, our internal auditor David Glavin and our Responsible Financial Officer, Graham Hudspeth for their work on the accounts and for attending Council meetings. Last but not least, I would like to say thank you to our Parish Clerk, Shirley Hudspeth for her contributions, advice and support during the year.'

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Those in attendance put forward the following questions and comments that were answered as appropriate:

- Hermitage Road, from the junction with Church Road to The Ridings, has numerous potholes.
The Council will discuss this at its next meeting.
- There is little play equipment in the village for children aged 8 – 11 years old. They would like a Skate Park in situ by the school's summer holidays.
This proposal was being progressed but such a project would not come to fruition in that timescale.
- The Saughall Neighbourhood Management Team was involved in arrangements for the Chester Half Marathon as it passed through the village. The Team received a payment for its assistance which it used to finance village projects.
- At the request of the resident in attendance, Mr Richard Nicholas information including the background to the flooding problem in Willow Hey was outlined. The planning authority had been advised by the Parish Council that there were drainage issues before the new housing scheme was built but had chosen to ignore it. Consequently, the Morris Homes development

compounded the problem. Chris Matheson MP had been instrumental in getting Welsh Water, Cheshire West and Chester Council Officers and the Parish Council to meet and agree how to remedy the situation and who would meet the costs of improving the existing drainage. Mr Nicholas informed that he would be happy to assist and protect the Parish Council's interests.

- Concerns were raised over the constant flooding in Hermitage Road by the Red House. It required digging out and clearing. Also, there was flooding at the Peg and it was thought that the grate may be blocked by debris.
- The Parish Council was concerned about speeding traffic through the village and had set up a Highways Working Group to look at this problem and make recommendations on possible traffic calming measures etc.

Mr Nicholas offered to assist the Working Group and also requested a copy of a map of the water courses in the Parish.

5. VOTE OF THANKS

A vote of thanks was proposed to the Chairman for the way he had conducted business on behalf of the Parish Council over the last year for which everyone was grateful.