

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH
COUNCIL held on 2 April 2001 at the Vernon Institute, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor Mrs M Anderson
Councillor H Dobson
Councillor Mrs P Humphrey
Councillor B Kerr (in the Chair)
Councillor A Warrington
Councillor Mrs J Young

Mr C McIlwrick – Homewatch Co-ordinator
County Councillor D Rowlands

54 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Bailey, Mrs BW Bell, Mrs JE Storrar, RA Storrar, Mrs D Whitton and GF Williams.

55 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 5 March 2001 be confirmed as a correct record.

56 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

57 ACCOUNTS

(a) Payments made since the meeting of the Council held on 5 March 2001:

	£	Cheque No
Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council (Street Cleaning and Grass Cutting)	3,075.82	101389
Chester City Council (Shrubs)	470.00	101390
Hacker Young (Audit Fees)	328.12	101391
Mrs S Hudspeth (Exp)	49.35	101392
Mr C Kearton (Sal)	57.70	101393
Mr C Moss (Quarterly Rent – Parish Room)	437.50	101394
Mrs S Hudspeth (Sal)	375.78	101395
Inland Revenue	474.90	101396
Christopher Buck (Hedge Trimming)	5.00	101397
Chester City Council (Rates)	105.00	Direct Debit

(b) Receipts

Interest to 22 March 2001 (Treasurer Account)	1.37
Interest to 21 March 2001 (Business Account)	38.52

(c) Audit of Accounts 1999/2000

The Clerk reported that the Auditor, Hacker Young, had signed off the Council's Accounts and apologised for the delay which had been caused by the increased workload as a result of taking on a large number of the Chester District Parish Councils' audits.

Recommendations made by the Auditor were as follows:

- “(1) There are a large number of un-presented cheques made payable to C Kearton showing on the bank reconciliation. We suggest that it is investigated as to whether these cheques are still valid and if not that they are adjusted for in the bank reconciliation.
- (2) The Income and Expenditure records are kept on a spreadsheet format not in a physical cash book. We suggest that a hard copy of the spreadsheets are signed by the Chairman and kept with the records to provide a form of internal audit.
- (3) We couldn't locate any documentation regarding Income. It would be good practise to obtain written documentation with receipts wherever possible.
- (4) We received one bank reconciliation for the year. If not already doing so, it would be good practise to complete bank reconciliation more frequently, quarterly is sufficient for the level of Income.
- (5) The Parish has a number of Assets. We suggest that it is good practise if all such items are stamped with “Property of Saughall and Shotwick Park Parish Council”.”

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Recommendations (1) and (5) be referred for further discussion and decision to the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee scheduled for 26 April 2001;
- (2) It be noted that recommendation (3) is being currently complied with, the Auditor received copies of the list of Income from 1 April 1999 to 31 March 2000 along with supporting receipts as appropriate; and
- (3) Recommendations (2) and (4) be complied with.

58 POLICE/HOMEWATCH

(a) Police

It was reported that PC John Guest was no longer Saughall's Rural Police Officer having moved on for self development purposes and that PC Gareth Cooper was now covering the area.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk be requested to:

- (1) invite PC Cooper to future Parish Council meetings; and
- (2) send a letter to PC Guest thanking him, on behalf of the Council, for all the work he has done in the village over the years and wishing him well in his new posting.

(b) Homewatch

Mr McIlwrick reported that the Homewatch had held a meeting on 29 March 2001 and had been supported by the attendance of Superintendent Peter Hindle and Temporary Inspector Cleworth, who was now working in this area for an unspecified period of time.

Mr McIlwrick hoped to make contact soon with PC Cooper as he wished to discuss a number of issues at “grass roots level”.

It was noted that there had been a number of problems at the Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School and that the Homewatch would help all it could. Youths were responsible for causing damage and Mr McIlwrick appealed to people to pass on any information they may have regarding recent incidents.

The Homewatch was continuing with its patrols of the village but it was noted that they were somewhat irregular due to personal commitments.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(c) Chester Community Safety Partnership Funding Bid

Inspector Martin Findlow had informed the Clerk that the Cheshire Constabulary had been successful with its outline bid to provide mobile CCTV cameras to enable it to target “hot spots” for crime and disorder. The Constabulary would now fine tune its bid ready for submission in round two of the bidding process. Although, being successful with the outline bid was no guarantee, Inspector Findlow was quietly confident of success at round two.

It was noted that the bid for the loop to join CCTV cameras together in the City Centre so all could be monitored in one place was also through to the second round of bidding.

Members hoped that if the City loop bid was successful it might be possible to link Saughall in, if the Council installed a CCTV camera.

(d) Crime and Disorder in Saughall

Christine Russell MP had received a response from Charles Clarke MP, the Home Office Minister, to the Clerk's letter to the Home Secretary on anti-social behaviour in Saughall.

Mr Clarke was sorry that the Juvenile Offenders Unit had taken so long to reply to the Clerk's letter. He agreed that it was unacceptable to wait six and a half months for a response.

Mr Clarke was also sorry that the Clerk felt the response eventually received did not address the points she had originally raised. However, the Juvenile Offenders Unit was not at that time aware of the Islington Scheme which was a local initiative.

The Acceptable Behaviour Contract was one of a raft of measures spawned from the Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) which the Government introduced on 1 April 1999. ASBOs were introduced to target activities which disrupted the lives of individuals, families or communities. ASBOs were an important addition to the range of responses available to tackle anti-social behaviour.

The police or local authority could apply for an ASBO to deal with those aged 10 and above causing harassment, alarm or distress to their neighbourhood. They were Civil Orders akin to an injunction, which prohibited the anti-social behaviour and may include other provisions such as barring the subject of the Order from specified places at certain times. Breach of the Order was a criminal offence that carried a maximum term of five years' imprisonment. The Home Office has strongly encouraged local agencies to consider the use of these powers in tackling local problems of crime and disorder. They were now genuinely making a difference as a key tool in an overall anti-social behaviour strategy which includes the youth justice reforms referred to in the letter sent by the Juvenile Offenders Unit.

It was noted that Islington Council had developed the Anti-Social Behaviour Contract as a way of tackling anti-social behaviour conducted by juveniles without recourse to the Courts. These were not a replacement for ASBOs but could be a useful alternative where the behaviour of the individual concerned was not sufficiently serious as to warrant an ASBO. Targeted effectively, ABCs, as they have become known, could educate children and their parents to take responsibility and ownership of their unacceptable behaviour by making them sign a document in which they agree not to behave in an unacceptable way.

ABCs were quick, flexible and cheap – use of them complemented the evidence gathering process required in order to seek an ASBO. Islington Council was committed to using ASBOs against those who continually breach their Contract.

The Clerk had mentioned in her letter to the Home Secretary that young offenders should be named in the press in an effort to deter their offending. The Minister reminded the Council that the media were free to attend Youth Courts and to report cases, but that there were restrictions on the way in which cases were reported so as to preclude the identification of the young people involved. These restrictions were set out in Section 49 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 which prohibited the publication of any report or picture which might reveal the young person's name, address or school.

The Court, however, had discretion to lift those restrictions in certain circumstances. One example was when it would be in the public interest to do so. The Government had been encouraging Courts to fully exercise their discretion and believed that in the public interest consideration should include the need to prevent offending by the young person, so long as it was consistent with the need to have regard to the welfare of that person. Other examples where lifting restrictions may be appropriate were where the offending was persistent or serious or had impacted on a large number of people.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the contents of the Home Office Minister's letter be noted;
- (2) the letter be referred to the next meeting of the Crime and Disorder Committee scheduled for 7:30pm on 3 May 2001; and
- (3) Christine Russell MP be thanked for obtaining an appropriate reply to the Clerk's letter from the Home Office and commiserations be sent from the Council as she had recently been the victim of a crime herself.

59 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 22 March 2001 be received;
- (2) Councillor RA Storrar be reminded to contact Mr Barry Davies of Chester City Council in order to chase up details on the sewer proposal and on the work required to drain Fiddlers Lane Playing Field, both of which are outstanding; and
- (3) the next meeting of the Crime and Disorder Committee be held at 7:30pm on Thursday 3 May 2001 in the Parish Room, 2 Fiddlers Lane, Saughall.

60 PLANNING MATTERS

- (a) Erection of a dwelling on land adjacent to The Beeches, Beeches Lane, Saughall

This planning matter would be considered by Chester City Council's Planning Board on 11 April 2001. On the list of Planning Applications sent to the Clerk, Planning Officers were recommending refusal of the application.

Councillor A Warrington informed the Council that he had received a letter from the developer, Mr David Bell, and proceeded to read it out. The letter sought to address the Council's concerns raised at its last meeting which resulted in the Clerk writing to the Planning Authority.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the current position be noted;
 - (2) further discussion concerning the Council's consideration of the planning application be carried out in Part 2 of the meeting when the press and public are excluded; and
 - (3) a report on the outcome of the planning application be brought to the next meeting of the Council by Councillor RA Storrar.
- (b) Cheshire Planning Forum – 30 March 2001, 2pm, Council Chamber, Wyvern House, The Drumber, Winsford

Councillors B Kerr, Mrs JE and RA Storrar had attended the Forum. It had been an interesting meeting but no issues of any relevance to Saughall had cropped up. Issues considered included the erection of mobile phone masts and health implications. There had also been a talk by Martin Bell MP on his experiences in dealing with planning matters, mostly in his constituency.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

- (c) Chester in Partnership on Community Planning Local Area Meetings

No one attended this event.

- (d) Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Planning Application Consultations

The Council was informed that City Councillor RA Storrar had requested that every Parish Council in the Chester District receive a copy of the Chester City Council report which outlined the protocol adopted by the

Development Control Service with regard to consultation on planning applications.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and copies of the protocol adopted by Chester City Council in relation to planning matters be circulated to all Members of the Council.

61 HIGHWAY MATTERS

(a) Hermitage Road – Slurry

Councillor Mrs J Young reported that there had been no change to the situation on Hermitage Road with regard to slurry.

RESOLVED:

That the situation on Hermitage Road be considered again at the next meeting of the Council.

(b) Kingswood Lane

RESOLVED:

That this matter be deferred to the next meeting of the Council when Councillor RA Storrar will be in attendance and will bring a report.

(c) Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School – Crossing Patrol

RESOLVED:

That a reply to the Clerk's letter to the Area Education Manager be awaited.

(d) Sea Hill Road, Saughall

The Clerk had received a response to her letter from the Director of Transportation and Planning at Flintshire County Council. The Parish Council's concerns regarding the speeding of vehicles on Sea Hill Road had been noted. However, there was currently no capital money available for traffic calming but a copy of the Clerk's letter had been passed to Sealand Town Council for its consideration as part of next year's match funding initiatives if it identified it as a priority.

RESOLVED:

That the position be noted.

(e) Brambles - Hermitage Road

Councillor Mrs J Young reported that she, with the help of Mr Christopher Buck, had cut back the offending brambles on Hermitage Road.

RESOLVED: That

(1) Councillor Mrs J Young be thanked for taking appropriate action; and

(2) Mr Christopher Buck be thanked for the work undertaken and a token payment of £5 be made.

(f) Hermitage Road

It was reported that Hermitage Road needed to be delittered and there was a build up of rubbish at No 2.

RESOLVED:

That Mr Ron Dunn of Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council be requested to ensure that Hermitage Road is delittered as soon as possible.

(g) Caprone, Coalpit Lane

Councillor Mrs J Young reported that conifers had been planted.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(h) Junction of Church Lane and Fiddlers Lane

RESOLVED:

That the District Engineer be requested to carry out temporary repairs at the junction.

(i) Wheelchair Access at Woodvale Stores

It was reported that the District Engineer had carried out temporary work in order to provide the required access. He would undertake a permanent improvement in due course.

(j) Weekend Bus Service to the Countess of Chester Hospital

At a recent Parish Council Surgery, Councillor RA Storrar had received a request that a bus service be provided to the Countess of Chester Hospital on a weekend. He understood that there was currently a pilot scheme running with grants of up to £10,000 available to Parish Councils if local need could be identified.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to write to the County Transport Co-ordinator requesting that the matter be placed on the agenda for discussion by the Highways & Transportation Local Joint Committee for Chester.

62 ENVIRONMENT MATTERS

(a) Play Area Inspection - Fiddlers Lane Playing Field

The Council noted that all play equipment in the field was in good order although it needed to be painted.

RESOLVED:

That the condition of the play equipment be noted.

(b) Millennium Park Land

The Clerk had received a letter dated 26 March 2001 from Ms Linda Mitchell, Development Team Leader, Grosvenor Housing Association Ltd. Ms Mitchell informed that the Association was disappointed that it was not able to proceed with the project on Lodge Lane. It was due to the high level of site abnormalities which came to light during the progress of its site and services investigations. The most expensive of these abnormal costs being the necessity to re-route the drainage provision.

The Association had lost its allocation of funding with the Housing Corporation for the financial year 2000/2001 but was still interested in progressing a development on the site in the future when the County Council (in liaison with the Parish Council) became clear about the intentions over the disposal of the land.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the letter from the Grosvenor Housing Association be noted.

(c) Notice Boards – The Ridings Infant Schools

RESOLVED:

That Councillor A Warrington be requested to speak to the Headteacher at the Ridings Infant School to establish whether the school prefers a free standing notice board or one that is fitted to the wall, before Mr Ebbrell is commissioned to make it.

(d) Lodge Lane – Street Lighting

It was reported that there was no street lighting at the end of the residential properties near to the Old Coach Road driveway.

RESOLVED:

That the village's street lighting be reviewed at the next meeting of the Council and a priority list drawn up.

(e) All Saints' Churchyard

Councillor Kerr reported that he had held discussions with the Vicar over the state of the churchyard. He had been informed that the Parochial Church Council had funding available to tidy up the land in question. An insurance claim had been made for the damage to the fence.

RESOLVED:

That the position be noted.

(f) Litter Bins

The Clerk had asked Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council for a quotation to repair/replace the litter bins damaged on Church Road and The Ridings.

RESOLVED:

That the situation be noted.

63 YOUTH PARISH COUNCIL/YOUTH FORUM
YOUTH PROJECT

Members referred to the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 22 March 2001. (Minute No 23/2001 refers)

Councillor B Kerr asked if 3 or 4 Members would agree to form the Youth Project's Management Committee as the Project needed more adult support. It could then apply for funding to continue and to provide the youth workers necessary to its running.

It was noted that the Clerk had put a piece in the April 2001 Parish Newsletter appealing for people to come forward to help the Project.

The Council considered how it could re-launch the Youth Parish Council. Councillor Mrs J Young suggested that an open meeting of the youth of the village be convened in an attempt to take the matter forward. It would allow young people to air their views and provide a flavour of their perceptions on what was required in the village for them.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Councillor Mrs J Young be requested to sound out the young people to establish what form the proposed meeting should take; and
- (2) these matters be further considered at the next meeting of the Council.

64 VERNON INSTITUTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Council received the Minutes of the Vernon Institute Management Committee meetings held on 14 November 2000, 9 January 2001 and 13 February 2001 and noted their contents.

A letter had been sent by the Clerk to the Chairman of the Vernon Institute Management Committee, Mr B Murphy. At the current time no proper working relationship was being maintained between the two organisations.

RESOLVED:

That the position be noted and the matter further considered at the next meeting of the Council when hopefully the Clerk has received a response from Mr Murphy.

65 PARISH COUNCIL SURGERIES

RESOLVED:

That the rota for forthcoming Surgeries be as follows:

Date	Members
7 April 2001	Councillor Mrs M Anderson Councillor Mrs P Humphrey
14 April 2001	Councillor B Kerr
21 April 2001	Councillor H Dobson Councillor A Warrington
28 April 2001	Councillor Mrs J Young Councillor Mrs P Humphrey
5 May 2001	Councillor A Warrington
12 May 2001	Councillor H Dobson Councillor Mrs P Humphrey

66 CHESHIRE ASSOCIATION OF TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

RESOLVED: That

- (1) this Council renew its membership for a further year at the annual subscription fee of £420.86;
- (2) the contents of the Association's Statement on Standards of Service be noted;

- (3) 12 copies of the Local Council Review be purchased for Members and the Clerk at a total annual cost of £107.88;
- (4) Councillors A Bailey, Mrs JE Storrar and A Warrington be requested to represent the Council at Area Meetings; and
- (5) the content of the Associations Training Programme be noted along with the fact that the Rural White Paper Conference – Byley Village Hall, Saturday 7 April 2001 has been cancelled because of the Foot and Mouth crisis.

67 COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED

- letter from JB Joyce & Co dated 7 March 2001 concerning the proposed dial restoration for which a quote was received, wondering if the matter is still receiving consideration.

Referred to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

- letter from Revd D Hay dated 6 March 2001 acknowledging receipt of the churchyard maintenance grant.
- letter from Alan Johnson MP, Minister for Competitiveness, Department of Trade and Industry, about the future of the Post Office network.
- letter from the Countryside Agency dated 2 March 2001 thanking the Parish Council for taking part in the Survey – report of findings due out in the Summer.
- letter from Cheshire County Council's Countryside Access Manager dated 22 March 2001 re. Foot & Mouth Disease: Re-appraisal of urban fringe footpath closures.
- letter from Chester City Council's Community Development Officer dated March/April 2001 re. Community Grant Aid 2001/2002.

Clerk to establish if grants are available for the painting of the play equipment.

- letter from Chester City Council's Project Support Officer re. Parish Partnership Reception – 28 November 2001, 7:30pm, Town Hall, Chester.
- letter from Principal Officer, Cheshire Community Council dated 27 March 2001 offering dates to meet to discuss Parish Profile/Community Plan.

Clerk to invite Mrs Vivien Ellis to the May meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

68 CIRCULARS

The following circulars have been received, anyone requiring a copy would contact the Clerk:

CPRE – AGM – 22 March 2001

CPRE Voice Spring 2001

Cheshire County Council – Cheshire Matters

Cheshire County Council – Quality of Life 2000 – Area Results, Chester
Summary reports are being produced on a number of topics.

Local Agenda 21 in Cheshire

Welsh Water – New arrangements for sewerage services from 1 April 2001

Chester City Council’s Council Meeting Agenda – 28 March 2001

69 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for the items of business listed below on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

Item	Paragraph
Members’ Interests	(7) Financial/Business Affairs of a third party

PART 2: ITEMS OF BUSINESS CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE
PRESS AND PUBLIC

70 PLANNING MATTERS AND MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The Council reviewed its Standing Orders in relation to the interests of Members.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the relevant Standing Order No 57 be noted.