

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH
COUNCIL held on 3 September 2001 at the Vernon Institute, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor Mrs M Anderson
Councillor A Bailey (in the Chair)
Councillor Mrs BW Bell
Councillor H Dobson
Councillor SS Evans
Councillor Mrs P Humphrey
Councillor A Warrington
Councillor Mrs J Young

147 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

Councillor B Kerr
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar
Councillor RA Storrar
Councillor GF Williams

148 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 6 August 2001 be confirmed as correct record.

149 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute No 133 – Highway Matters

(j) Long Lane 40 MPH Repeater Sign

It was reported that the sign had been replaced.

(k) Telegraph Pole near Vernon Institute

The Clerk had written to BT concerning the state the pole was in and a response was awaited.

Minute No. 135 – Environment Matters

(f) Water Quality

The Clerk had written to United Utilities regarding the quality of water in Saughall. United Utilities had responded by letter on 28 August 2001 informing that it had investigated the matter. It understood the Council's concerns about the quality of the water supply, especially as the residents of the village often noticed it to be discoloured or containing particles.

It was the condition of the main which was causing this problem. United Utilities would shortly start work to replace the large water main in the area. This work would take approximately ten months and would result in customers receiving a better quality and more reliable water supply.

Minute No. 141 – Cheshire Association of Town and Parish Councils

It was agreed that Councillors A Bailey, A Warrington and Mrs J Young would attend the Annual Meeting of the Cheshire Association of Town and Parish Councils at 10:00am on Saturday, 13 October 2001 at Wincham Community Centre near Northwich, Cheshire. Following the Annual Meeting buffet lunch there would be a seminar on the Rural White Paper beginning at 2:00pm.

150 ACCOUNTS

(a) Payments made since the meeting of the Council held on 6 August 2001:

Financial Year 2001/2002	£	Cheque No
North West Federation of Parish Councils Assoc.	30.00	101432
Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council	2,762.22	101433
Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council	1,534.20	101434
Mrs S Hudspeth (Sal)	401.02	101435
Mrs S Hudspeth (Exp)	45.04	101436
Mrs J Young (bulbs)	50.00	101437
Merseyside Systems Development	65.00	101438

(b) Receipts

Interest to 21 August 2001 (14 day interest account)	103.65
Interest to 23 August 2001 (Treasurer account)	0.55
Chester City Council – Grants	
VI Clock Refurbishment	400.00
Painting of Play Equipment	520.00
Street Cleaning	1,996.80

(c) Pilot Local Council ‘Self Selection of Auditor’ Scheme

The Clerk reported that the Associate Director, Audit Appointments and Performance, Audit Commission, had written on 21 August 2001 to inform that the Commission had evaluated the pilot scheme and had concluded that it was not a viable process, either for the Commission or audit suppliers. Generally, new suppliers found local council work to be interesting, but had reservations regarding the scope of the work and the overheads associated with the Commission’s requirements. Where suppliers were keen to continue with this type of work, they usually had concerns that the amount of audit work allocated to them needed to be sufficient to make the investment in the ‘learning curve’ worthwhile. The

Commission also had reservations about the ability of some firms to meet professional and quality standards without substantial further investment.

Nearly nine out of ten local council representatives who responded to the Commission's survey of the pilot scheme thought their audit was good or better. Interestingly, very critical comments in the body of the questionnaires did not consistently translate into a negative overall result. This suggested that the exercising of choice was itself a significant determining factor of satisfaction as well as the auditors' performance. However, if the Commission was to continue with the 'self selection of auditor' scheme for individual local councils, it felt that this would drive up the cost of audit and regulation of auditors even further.

A review of the external audit regime for local councils was nearing completion. Radical changes were proposed in the external audit regime of local councils and it was the Commission's intention to undertake a competitive tendering exercise for contracts covering whole counties of local council later in the year.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

151 POLICE/HOMEWATCH

(a) Police

PC Cooper was not able to attend the Council meeting but he had written to the Chairman to inform him that the village had been pretty quiet recently.

However, PC Cooper had had occasion to speak to several young people the previous Friday evening who were congregating on the car park at the Vernon Institute. They had not been causing any particular problem but it was clearly not the ideal location for them to meet and he had moved them on. He had discussed the possibility of a Youth Shelter/Area with these young people and had found them to be extremely positive and supportive of the idea.

PC Cooper would attend a meeting of the Crime and Disorder Committee on Wednesday, 19 September 2001 to which all Members of the Parish Council were expected to attend and hoped to discuss youth issues and appropriate provision in the village for young people.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(b) Homewatch

Mr McIlwrick, the Homewatch Co-ordinator, reported an incident in Kingswood Lane three to four weeks ago where sheds had been broken into. He also informed of a number of distraction burglaries in the District involving bogus United Utilities officials.

Mr McIlwrick told the Council that he had negotiated sponsorship for a Homewatch newsletter. A future newsletter would carry an item on the Queen's Golden Jubilee in an attempt to get volunteers to come forward to help plan celebrations and organise events etc.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

152 YOUTH PARISH COUNCIL/YOUTH FORUM

It was reported that Councillor Kerr had spoken to Mrs Pattison who ran the Youth Project. She had maintained that if she could not get any qualified help to run the Project it would have to fold by the end of October 2001.

It was suggested however that two people were interested and that they might offer help in the running of a Youth Parish Council.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the report be received; and

(2) the Youth parish Council/Youth Forum be further explored at the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee scheduled for 20 September 2001.

153 VITAL VILLAGES – PARISH PLAN

The Clerk reported that she has yet to receive a list of contacts for groups that met at the Vernon Institute so that she could consult them on what should be included in the Community Plan.

It was suggested that local businesses, the schools, GP's and various community leaders should be sent a consultation letter.

RESOLVED: That

(1) all groups in the village be consulted and Councillor Mrs J Young be requested to supply the Clerk with an appropriate list of Consultees names and addresses; and

(2) Councillor Mrs P Humphrey be requested to supply the Clerk with a list of business consultees etc. so that they can be consulted as appropriate.

154 HIGHWAY MATTERS

- (a) Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School – Crossing Attendant

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to contact the County Transport Co-ordinator to register concern that the post is still vacant and asking what he intends to do to rectify the situation.

- (b) Fiddlers Lane/Church Road Junction

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to remind Cheshire County Council's District Engineer of the state of the junction and enquire when the necessary work will be undertaken.

- (c) Possible Weekend Bus Service – Saughall to the Countess of Chester Hospital

The Chester Area Public Transport Committee meeting had yet to take place. A possible weekend bus service – Saughall to the Countess of Chester Hospital – would be an agenda item for it.

- (d) Street Lighting

Mr Carl Gent, Cheshire County Council's Street Lighting Technician, had responded to the Council's request with detailed street lighting schemes and costs.

RESOLVED:

That the information provided by Mr Gent form an item for consultation by the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee scheduled for 20 September 2001.

- (e) Parish/Town Council Bus Shelter Scheme 2001/02

Members considered possible dates supplied by Cheshire County Council's Transport Co-ordination Officers for the site visit requested by the Council to look at various bus shelters and stops in the village.

The bus stop at the Peg (near the Ridings) was perceived as dangerous.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) 20 and 21 September 2001 be offered to County Transport Officers for the site visit. (Meeting at 10:30am at the Parish Room); and

- (2) the bus stop at the Peg be looked at during the site visit and a report be brought to the next meeting.

155 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) 2 Hermitage Road, Saughall

It was reported that the property had been sold.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to contact the property's owner, via the Estate Agent, and inform that it needs to be secured.

(b) Planning Application

Councillor Bailey reported that he had held a Planning Committee meeting at his home at 7:30pm on Wednesday, 22 August 2001 and had prepared Minutes which were circulated for information. (Appendix 1)

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 22 August 2001 be received;
- (2) planning applications which arrive when a Planning Committee is not scheduled be dealt with in the same way; and
- (3) in accordance with (2) above, the next meeting of the Planning Committee be held at 7:30pm on Thursday, 6 September 2001 and the Minutes be provided for the next meeting of the Council.

156 ENVIRONMENT MATTERS

(a) Play Area Inspection - Fiddlers Lane Playing Field

It was noted that all play equipment in the field was in good order and the field was in good condition following the recent drainage work undertaken, although there was mole activity.

Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council had agreed to relocate the goalposts and had promised to undertake this re-positioning soon following instructions from Councillor Kerr.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be received;
- (2) it be noted that there was little that could be done in respect of the mole problem on the field; and

(3) the Clerk be requested to chase up Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council and obtain a date for the goalposts re-positioning.

(b) Millennium Park Land

The Council received a report on proceedings from Members who had attended the meeting with County Councillor D Rowlands and Cheshire County Council's External Funding Officer, Stephen Wright, on 8 August 2001. Discussed were issues relating to the funding of the Parish Council's aspirations for recreational use of land to the North of Lodge Lane, Saughall.

Mr Wright had agreed to explore all of the funding alternatives discussed and respond to the Clerk by the middle of September 2001. He would discuss the potential to lease the land with Ian Gould, the County Property Manager, as the outcome might affect the potential courses of action open to the Parish Council.

Members also noted that Jeremy Taylor, the County Council's Director of Community Development, had responded to the Clerk's letter with details of the visit mentioned above and telling her that he would ensure that he was kept informed of any progress.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the report be received; and

(2) the letter from Cheshire County Council's External Funding Officer be awaited.

(c) Notice Board – The Ridings Infant School

Councillor Warrington had met on-site with Mr Bob Ebrell and had agreed the design and location of the notice boards. Mr Ebrell would now make them and install them to the agreed specifications.

(d) Grassed Amenity Areas

Members reported that residents had complained to them that the grass on the amenity areas was being allowed to get too long.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to pass the complaints to Mr Duncan Henderson of Chester City Council and ask him to respond.

(e) Street Cleaning

The Clerk reported that when there was a Public Holiday on a Monday, Saughall was litter picked on a Wednesday and Friday only.

Consequently, she would keep a close eye on the invoices received to ensure that the Council was not paying for a service it had not received.

(f) Spring Bulbs

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Mrs J Young be provided with a cheque for £50 in order that she can purchase spring bulbs for planting in the village.

(g) Tree in Parkway

The owner of a tree which needed cutting back in Parkway would be contacted.

(h) Litter Bin – Church Road

It was reported that it would cost £233.16 to replace the broken litter bin on Church Road.

RESOLVED:

The Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council be requested to replace the bin at a cost of £233.16 and litter bin provision in general be looked at at the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee scheduled for 20 September 2001.

157 VERNON INSTITUTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Mrs J Young be requested to inform the Vernon Institute Management Committee that this Council requires much more detail to be included in the Maintenance Plan for the Vernon Institute before it can give consideration to providing grant aid towards refurbishment.

158 PARISH COUNCIL SURGERIES

RESOLVED: That

(1) That the rota for the forthcoming Surgeries be as follows:

Date	Members
15 September 2001	Councillor A Bailey
22 September 2001	Councillor Mrs P Humphrey
29 September 2001	Councillor A Warrington
6 October 2001	Councillor B Kerr

and

(2) the Clerk be requested to get eight sets of keys cut to aid easy access to the Parish Room

159 COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED

The following communications had been received:

- letter dated 7 August 2001 plus Rural Housing Survey 2000 from Chester City Council's Strategy & Development Officer.

To Finance and General Purposes Committee.

- letter dated 7 August 2001 on Annual Inspection of Play Areas from Chester City Council's Parks and Open Spaces Manager.
- letter dated 8 August 2001 from Chester City Council's Local Panel Lead Officer regarding Local Panel funding. Details of projects or schemes to be submitted by 10 September 2001.

It was agreed to continue with the meeting of the Crime and Disorder Committee on 19 September 2001 even though it was after the cut off date for bids.

- letter dated 14 August 2001 from Chester City Council's Community Development Officer plus report on Survey of Millennium Projects in Rural Chester District.

Noted.

- letter dated 16 August 2001 from Chester City Council's Chairman of Ethics and Standards Committee re. Code of Conduct.

Noted.

- letter dated 14 August 2001 from Systems Development Manager, Merseyside Systems re. .gov style domain names - £65

It was agreed to register the domain name at a cost of £65.

- letter dated 15 August 2001 from Managing Director Chester FM re. proposed new radio station.

It was agreed that the Clerk would inform Chester FM on the Council's view regarding the new licence.

- letter dated 30 August 2001 from Chester City Council's Head of Democratic Services re. Local Government Act 2000.

Noted.

160 CIRCULARS

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

- Cheshire County Council's CQC August 2001
- Cheshire County Council's Signpost Newsletter – Summer 2001
- CPRE Voice – Summer 2001
- Chester City Council's Local Distinctiveness – Summer 2001
- Chester City Council's Economic Development News – Summer 2001
- Environment Agency Wales – Environment News for the Dee LEAP Area
- South Cheshire NHS – Cheshire West Primary Care Trust Addendum
- Chester City Council's Council Agenda 5 September 2001
- Cheshire Community Council's Cauldron Newsletter – August 2001

161 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
Industrial Relations	(1) particular employee (11) Industrial Relations

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

162 INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to contact ACAS in an attempt to move things along.

APPENDIX 1

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE held on 22 August 2001 in the home of the Chairman, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor A Bailey (in the Chair)
Councillor H Dobson
Councillor SS Evans
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar

39 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Application 01/01068/COU

RE: Change of use of brick agricultural building to storage/workshop/office

AT: Wynstead, Parkgate Road, Saughall

After a visit by the Chairman and due consideration by the Committee the following comments were passed to the District Council;

‘We are broadly in favour of this application, but have some reservations regarding the ingress and egress of extra vehicular traffic to the light industrial premises off a busy ‘A’ class road.

We would ask you to consider putting conditions on use for heavier industrial use and to restrict the hours of business if this is possible.’

Application 01/01069/S73

RE: Removal of condition No 1 on 2/3/03100 relating to agricultural occupancy

AT: Wynstead. Parkgate Road, Saughall

‘Although not experienced in the technicalities of the original conditions we understand that as the applicant is concerned with a business connected with the Green Belt, i.e. Farm and Light Industrial machinery, he therefore does not need the condition to be removed.

Secondly, their retention may ensure that the premises would be used for a similar purpose in the future. We feel the condition should remain.’