

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH
COUNCIL held on 6 October 2003 at the Vernon Institute, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor A Bailey (in the Chair)
Councillor Mrs P Humphrey
Councillor Mrs J Johnson
Councillor B Kerr
Councillor C Moss
Councillor R Shukla
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar (Part)
Councillor RA Storrar
Councillor A Warrington
Councillor C Wynne-Eyton (Tree Warden)
Councillor Mrs M Wynne-Eyton (Part)
Councillor Mrs J Young

Mr C Mellwrick (Saughall Homewatch)
County Councillor D Rowlands

199 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

Councillor A Marsden
Councillor Mrs D Whitton

200 CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor B Kerr declared an Interest in any matter that involved the Cheshire Community Council. He was its Chairman.

Councillor C Moss declared an Interest in item 6(c) on the agenda – Parish Room as he was the owner of the property.

201 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That subject to it being made clear that Councillor A Bailey was in the Chair, the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 11 September 2003 be confirmed as a correct record.

202 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute No 178(c) – Housing Allocations Policy

Councillor RA Storrar informed that he had provided the Clerk with a copy of Chester City Council's Housing Allocations Policy.

Minute No 181 – Accounts

Councillor Mrs J Young reported that she had spent £49.98 on bulbs.

203 ACCOUNTS

(a) Payments made since the meeting of the Council held on 11 September 2003:

Financial Year 2003/2004	£	Cheque No
Rural Services (Cutting down trees)	250.00	101636
Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council	1,467.04	101637
ITK Ltd (Internet services – website domain)	147.25	101638
Warrington Borough Council (Photocopying)	16.45	101639
Johnson's Oak Tree Nursery (Hanging basket maintenance)	80.00	101640
Mrs S Hudspeth (Exp)	77.06	101641
Mr C Moss (Parish Room rental 1 Oct – 31 Dec 2003)	312.50	101642
Inland Revenue	747.36	101643
Mrs S Hudspeth (Sal)	540.69	101644
Cardiff Marriot Hotel (NOW CANCELLED)	199.08	101645

(b) Receipts

Interest to 21 September 2003 (14 Day Account)	42.02
Interest to 23 September 2003 (Treasurer Account)	0.14

(c) Parish Room

The application for rate re-evaluation had been made. It was known that it was a slow process and the Council would have to be patient.

However, the Council had agreed that it would carry out its annual review of its rental of the Parish Room and decide whether or not to continue with it.

RESOLVED:

That the situation be noted and the Finance and General Purposes Committee be requested to consider the outcome of the re-evaluation process in due course and make a recommendation as appropriate.

204 POLICE/HOMEWATCH

(a) Police

PC R Fisher had sent his apologies as he was unable to attend the meeting.

Concerns were raised that cars were being parked on the grass verge on Long Lane.

It was reported that children were frequenting the churchyard in the evenings. They had been knocking pots over etc.

RESOLVED:

That the reports be received and the Chairman be requested to e-mail PC Fisher with the concerns raised in the hope he would take appropriate action.

(b) Homewatch

Mr McIlwrick informed that travellers had occupied the Caxios site and caused a lot of damage to property.

The Homewatch would meet the following evening to appoint a Chairman. Mr McIlwrick informed that if he was appointed as Chairman he intended to carry out a review of the Homewatch's operations and hoped to re-establish neighbourhood patrols.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and the Council continue to support the Homewatch.

205 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meetings of the following Committees be received:

Environment and Highways Committee (Informal meeting) held on 18 September 2003

Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 25 September 2003

206 PARISH CONSTITUTION

At the meeting of the Council held on 3 March 2003 Members were informed of the situation in respect of representations in the Parish of Tarvin. Chester City Council's Cabinet had agreed that the number of Councillors representing Tarvin Parish Council's two Wards should be changed because of an imbalance between the elected representation. As the situation was not dissimilar to that in Saughall it was resolved (Minute No 49/2003 refers) to consider this matter again in September 2003. The item had been deferred at the meeting of the Council held on 11 September 2003.

Members agreed that in terms of Parish Councillors there was a clear imbalance between Saughall and Shotwick Park. Currently, there were 12 Councillors representing Saughall and 2 representing Shotwick Park.

According to the 2002 Register of Electors for Saughall and Shotwick Park there were 2,483 electors in Saughall and 34 in Shotwick Park.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to contact Ms Christine Lawley of Chester City Council to request that consideration be given by the Principal Authority to only having one seat in Shotwick Park and thirteen in Saughall or alternatively to combine both Wards into one.

207 AFFORDABLE HOUSING AT LODGE LANE, SAUGHALL
- BURIAL LAND IN THE VILLAGE

Mr Ian Gould, the County Property Officer, had reported that he had discussed the proposal for 12 units of affordable housing in Lodge Lane informally with Members of the County Council's Property and Operations Board and with some Members of the County Farms Panel. Everyone seemed to be in favour of proceeding and it would be discussed further at the next meeting of the Panel. Mr Gould promised to let the Council have a firm date in respect of this meeting in due course.

At the last meeting of the Parish Plan Steering Group, Mr Hallas, representing the All Saints Parochial Church Council, had raised concerns over the lack of burial land left in Saughall. However, the Council was pursuing the affordable housing initiative and the original proposal which had also involved purchasing land from the County Council for burial purposes was not now being taken forward.

A circular had been received from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in respect of land for disposal at less than market value. A Code of Practice would be available from December 2003 about burial grounds and arrangements to assist the purchase of land for that purpose.

RESOLVED:

That the possibility of purchasing a parcel of land from Cheshire County Council for burial purposes be considered at a future meeting when the Council is in receipt of the Code of Practice, etc.

208 GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK DEVELOPMENT

The Council received the Minutes of the Golden Jubilee Park Focus Group meeting held on 29 September 2003 and noted their contents.

The Council considered the amendments it wanted to make to the site layout. It was noted that the oak tree on the perimeter of the Fiddlers Lane Playing Field did not have a Tree Preservation Order on it and would have to be removed to accommodate a football pitch. Mr Bird would amend the layout to include two football pitches, tree planting and removals, and the car park layout superimposed upon the basketball court.

Members turned their attention to the tendering process noting that the tender could not be let until funding was in place. Tapping into funding streams was now a major priority for the Council and its partners and a Business Plan would need to be drawn up to assist this.

As a temporary measure the new land had been ploughed, rolled and grass seeded and it was hoped that the land could be in use by next Spring/Summer.

RESOLVED: That

(1) Mr D Bird be thanked for the help he has given the Council in respect of the planning application;

- (2) the Clerk be requested to provide a letter to the Planning Authority to accompany the revised site layout; and
- (3) the first meeting of the Working Party established to seek out and exploit grant aid opportunities be held at 7:00pm on Monday, 13 October 2003 in the Parish Room.

209 PARISH PLAN

The Council received the Minutes of the Parish Plan Steering Group meeting held on 15 September 2003 and noted their contents.

Councillor RA Storrar reported that the Youth Focus Group would meet at 6:30pm on Monday, 27 October 2003 at the Vernon Institute and Rachel Cowan of the Cheshire Community Council had been invited to attend.

The Chairman reported that he had been in contact with Peter Cook of the Cheshire Community Council and had arranged with him to put a computer into the Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School on 20 October 2003. Suitable questions which would be entered into the computer for the children to answer would be drawn up and agreed with the Headteacher. The cost of the computer would be £200.00 for the three days it would be installed in the School.

It was noted that Mr George Southey would keep the Parish Council in touch with the views of people over 50 years of age.

Councillor A Warrington reported that the Community Halls Focus Group had met on Thursday, 11 September 2003. The meeting had been well attended and interesting and the next one had been arranged for Monday, 24 November 2003 when the Focus Group would review the questionnaire.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the reports be noted; and
- (2) the provisional arrangements made to install a computer in the Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School at a cost of £200.00 for three days be agreed.

210 COMMUNITY SEATS

A request had been made for benches to be provided so that older people of the village could rest on the way to and from the local shops.

It was noted that community seats were needed in the village but that they would not be used by just older people. They would be the focal point for youngsters in the evenings.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) one community seat be positioned on the green opposite the Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School under a street light, for a trial period; and

- (2) the Chairman be requested to approach Mr Brian Ebbrell for a quote to position the seat on a concrete base.

211 TRAFFIC CALMING

The Council reviewed the traffic calming measures presently in place in the village and gave consideration to providing more. Roads scrutinised included Hermitage Road, Sea Hill Road, Church Road and Long Lane.

RESOLVED:

That an officer from the County Engineer's Department be invited to a future meeting to discuss traffic calming in the village.

212 ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

(a) North Gowy Area Committee – 30 September 2003

Councillors Mrs JE Storrar and Mrs M Wynne-Eyton informed that Chief Inspector Dave Hill had attended the meeting and a report on the damage caused by travellers in the village of Elton had been received.

Members discussed the dangers of confrontation between travellers and residents along with trespass issues. It was considered that representations should be made to Christine Russell MP that all trespass should be a criminal offence and not just that taking place on private land.

Training on playing equipment to RoSPA Standards had been offered to Parish Councillors via Christleton Parish Council who was co-ordinating arrangements for a day event. Members discussed the merits of being involved in and taking responsibility for inspections.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) trespass on parish Land be an item for further discussion at the next meeting of the Council scheduled for Thursday, 6 November 2003;
- (2) the offer of play equipment training offered by Chester City Council be not taken up; and
- (3) the Chairman be requested to try to bring up the issues of trespass and member training re. RoSPA, at the Annual General Meeting of the Cheshire Association of Town and Parish Councils scheduled for Thursday, 16 October 2003.

(b) Cheshire County Playing Fields Association – AGM – 17 September 2003

The Chairman reported that attendance at this meeting had been poor and that it had been arranged to clash with the Annual General Meeting of the Cheshire Community Council which was probably the reason for low attendance.

There had been a useful discussion on funding opportunities to provide sporting facilities.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(c) Chester in Partnership – 23 September 2003

Councillor Mrs JE Storrar reported that this meeting had been well attended and that good presentations had been made.

Eight students from Mill View School (now at Upton Community High School) had carried out a survey on Chester Railway Station. As a result the Station was to have a facelift.

There had been a number of workshops including one on crime reduction.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(d) Cheshire Community Council – Civic Pride Competition

Councillor A Warrington informed that he had been unable to attend. It was known that the village had not won any awards. The results were awaited.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

213 HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY

The Council wished to review Chester City Council's Housing Allocations Policy and make any recommendations it though necessary to bring about improvement in the interests of local people who wished to remain in Saughall.

It was considered that the best way forward may be to get other Chester parishes involved in the debate.

RESOLVED:

That the Housing Allocation Policy be considered at the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee scheduled for 7:30pm on Thursday, 23 October 2003 and Councillor Mrs D Whitton be invited to attend.

214 VERNON INSTITUTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

No Minutes had been received of the last meeting of the Committee. Councillor RA Storrar had been in attendance and informed that the Parish Council had been thanked for its financial contribution to the improvement works recently carried out to the

Village Hall. The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Tuesday, 14 October 2003.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

215 PARISH COUNCIL SURGERIES

RESOLVED:

That the Parish Council's Surgeries rota for the next four weeks be as follows:

Date	Member
11 October 2003	Councillor C Wynne-Eyton
18 October 2003	Councillor Mrs P Humphrey
25 October 2003	Councillor C Moss
1 November 2003	Councillor Mrs J Young

216 METHODIST CHURCH – NEW BUILDING PROJECT

The Chairman reported that the Minister, Rev Margaret Banks, had written to him setting out the progress made in respect of the proposed new church.

The project had been accepted by the Methodist Church at area level (the Chester Circuit) in June 2003. The Chester & Stoke on Trent District had then considered the proposal and following much consultation had given their agreement to it. The proposal would now be considered at national level and a decision would be known in a few weeks time.

If approval was given the next stage would be to apply for planning permission. Approval would also mean a project launch and a special Church service, probably in the New Year.

The Church's "Way Forward Group" would be meeting at 7:30pm on Tuesday, 18 November 2003 in the Methodist Church and an invitation was given to Parish Councillors to attend to consider the project, launch and fund raising needed in detail. Support and input into the project was welcomed.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

217 COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED

The following communications were received. Any one wishing to see a copy would contact the Clerk.

- letter from Chester City Council's Performance and Best Value Team dated September 2003 requesting a copy of the Council's 2001/2002 Accounts as it is gathering information for the City Council's Best Value Review of Public Space.

The Clerk will respond.

- letter from Chester City Council's Project Support Officer, Ms Linda Jewsbury, dated 17 September 2003 re. The Parish Partnership Reception on 19 November 2003 and enclosing official invitations.

Noted.

- letter from Chester City Council's Area Managers dated 15 September 2003 informing of Area Committee information available on the City Council's website.

Noted – Clerk to pull down the Minutes of the last meeting.

- letter from the North West Federation for Sport, Recreation and Conservation dated 1 September 2003 sent via the Cheshire County Playing Fields Association informing of a seminar at 7:30pm on Thursday, 9 October 2003 in the Bolton & District Anglers Club to explain how Community Active Sports Clubs can be of use to gain benefits for clubs.

Noted.

218 CIRCULARS

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

The Local Channel