

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

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

PC R Fisher
Mr C McIlwrick (Saughall Homewatch)

219 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

Councillor Mrs J Johnson
Councillor Mrs J Young

220 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(d) on the agenda – Parish Room – Rates Re-evaluation – as he was the owner of the property.

221 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 11 October 2003 be confirmed as a correct record.

222 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute No 209 – Parish Plan

It was reported that the Methodist Church was to hold an Open Day to inform of its plans to build a new Methodist Church Hall.

RESOLVED:

That Councillors Mrs JE Storrar, A Warrington and Mrs D Whitton be requested to attend the Methodist Church's Open Day and bring a report on proceedings to the next meeting of the Council.

223 ACCOUNTS

(a) Audited Accounts for the Year 2002/2003

The Clerk reported that the External Auditor, Hacker Young, had signed off last year's Accounts and that everything had been in order. Appropriate notices would now be posted.

(b) Payments made since the meeting of the Council held on 6 October 2003:

Financial Year 2003/2004	£	Cheque No
United Utilities (Water Rates on Parish Room)	17.19	101646
Mr A Bailey (Hotel accommodation expenses)	199.08	101647
Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council	185.35	101648
Mrs S Hudspeth (Sal)	540.91	101649
Mr A Bailey (Travelling expenses)	163.20	101650
GJ & AW Dutton (Ploughing and Sowing)	822.50	101651
Hacker Young (2002/2003 Audit)	411.25	101652
Mrs S Hudspeth (Exp)	61.31	101653

(c) Receipts

Interest to 21 October 2003 (14 Day Account)	40.99
Interest to 23 October 2003 (Treasurer Account)	0.02

(d) Parish Room Rates Re-evaluation

Councillor C Moss left the room whilst this item was discussed.

The Valuation Officer had written to the Clerk to inform that he had received her proposal to alter the Rating List on 30 July 2003. The start date of the settlement was 14 July 2004 and the target date for settlement would be 22 October 2004.

Therefore, as it would be sometime before the Council would be aware of the outcome of its appeal, it was agreed to review the Council's occupancy of the Parish Room.

The Chairman reported that in total the room cost the Council £2,353.72 last year as follows:

	£
Rent	1,250.00
Rates	1,026.00
Utilities	77.72

Members weighed up the costs against the benefits of having the room available. It was noted that the Vernon Institute did not have as many rooms available as it used to and that there was competition for its two remaining meeting rooms. There were alternatives that may incur costs. There was a parish room at All Saints Church, the Methodist Church Hall, and rooms available at both schools.

The Chairman informed that currently the room cost every resident of the Parish £1 per year.

The Parish Room was available to other organisations and could be used for the benefit of the community.

RESOLVED:

That the Council continue to let the Parish Room for a further year and undertake a review in November 2004.

224 POLICE/HOMEWATCH

(a) Police

PC R Fisher reported that there had been eight thefts in the village over the last month. There had been attempted burglaries at the three public houses and at the Woodvale Stores. A man from Blacon had been apprehended for causing criminal damage. There had also been four incidents of youth nuisance.

Councillor RA Storrar reported that travellers would be arriving in the Ellesmere Port/Chester area this month to attend a trial. It was expected that illegal encampments would be set up.

PC Fisher was invited to attend the Youth Club on Monday evenings to lend his support to the excellent work Mrs Povey was carrying out. He agreed to pop in when he could.

(b) Homewatch

Mr McIlwrick reported that he had been elected chairman of the Village Homewatch organisation. He was in touch with all Homewatch Co-ordinators and would be calling a Homewatch meeting in the Parish Room at 7:30pm on Wednesday, 16 December 2003. It was expected that the Homewatch would bring out a regular newsletter.

Mr McIlwrick also reported on the three fires that had been set in the woods behind Parkway.

225 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 6 October 2003 be received

226 REVIEW OF COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Chairman raised concerns over Members non-attendance at meetings and over some Members failing to apologise for absences as the last meetings of both the Environment and Highways Committee and Finance and General Purposes Committee were inquorate.

Arranging meetings, sending out agenda and supporting paperwork and then being unable to hold them was a waste of the Clerk's time, expensive and an inefficient way for the Council to operate.

The Council was asked whether it wished to reduce the number of its Committee meetings and/or increase their membership.

Councillor Kerr suggested that it maybe appropriate to have a complete review of the Council's structure at the end of the Municipal Year for implementation at the beginning of the next. Perhaps the Council could move to a 6 or 8 week meeting cycle similar to that of Principal Authorities.

Members were asked to attend meetings when they could and to apologise and have good reason when they could not. They had stood for election and as Councillors had took on the responsibilities that went with the office.

RESOLVED:

That the Finance and General Purposes Committee be requested to look at the Council's structure in the New Year and make recommendations to the Council for implementation from the beginning of the next Municipal Year.

227 PARISH CONSTITUTION

The Clerk had written to Ms Christine Lawley, Team Leader (Civic and Electoral) at Chester City Council, asking that her Council's Cabinet give consideration to only having one Parish Council seat in Shotwick Park and thirteen in Saughall or alternatively combining the two Wards into one.

Ms Lawley had responded to the Clerk in the affirmative. The Cabinet would consider the Council's request and if it agreed it would not come into effect until 2006 so there was no rush.

RESOLVED:

That the position be noted and Ms Lawley be reminded nearer the time about the Council's request.

228 GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK DEVELOPMENT

(a) Golden Jubilee Park Funding Working Party

The Council noted the Action List drawn up at the meeting of the Funding Working Party held on 13 October 2003.

Councillor Kerr reported that he had been in touch with WREN to establish when decisions would be made during 2004 to allocate funding. The information provided was as follows:

Panel Meeting Date	Application Deadlines
12 January 2004	1 December 2003
6 April 2004	24 February 2004
12 July 2004	31 May 2003
11 October 2004	31 August 2004

The Working Party had suggested that the Council set up a separate bank account in which to pay funding attracted for the Golden Jubilee Park development. Members considered the costs and the benefits of this and looked at the alternative of establishing a fund as it had done for other projects and initiatives that were ongoing.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) no separate bank account be set up for the Golden Jubilee Park development and a savings fund be established instead once the funding was made available; and
 - (2) the Awareness “Open House” event be held on Saturday, 10 January 2004 and £50.00 be made available to assist the event.
- (b) Second Round of Applications for Payment from Gowry North Area Committee for Local Projects and Schemes

RESOLVED: That

- (1) in view of its successful funding bid the Council make no further applications to the Area Committee in this financial year; and
 - (2) Councillor Mrs JE Storrar be requested to liaise with Mr C McIlwrick over the possibility of making an application in respect of a community safety project.
- (c) Planning Application

Councillor RA Storrar reported that the Constabulary and the County Engineer were not happy with the car parking arrangements and the entrance/exit detailed in the plans. Consequently, the application may now be delayed until the December 2003 meeting of Chester City Council’s Planning Board.

RESOLVED:

That the position be noted and a letter from the Planning Officer setting out the problems the planning application has encountered be awaited.

(d) Tree Planting Scheme

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Tree Warden be authorised to order the trees for the scheme and make the arrangements for planting with Mr Choi, the Headteacher of Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School;
- (2) no trees be planted behind the Scout Hut;
- (3) wood chippings to be laid between the trees; and
- (4) parents, the Gardening Club, the Youth Club and the Uniformed Groups be invited to help plant the trees.

(e) Golden Jubilee Park Focus Group Meeting

RESOLVED:

That the next meeting of the Golden Jubilee Park Focus Group be held at 7:30pm on Monday, 8 January 2004 in the Parish Room.

(f) Community Seating

The Chairman reported that he would arrange to site a community seat on the Saughall Hey green area opposite the Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School.

Also, the Council noted that Cheshire County Council had agreed to make a contribution of £500 towards the cost of the seats purchased for the Golden Jubilee Park.

229 TRESPASS ON PARISH COUNCIL LAND

RESOLVED: That

- (1) this item be deferred until the Finance and General Purposes Committee has had an opportunity to consider the implications; and
- (2) Councillor RA Storrar be requested to identify the appropriate Chester City Council Officer and liaise with the Clerk over an invitation to him/her to attend a Committee meeting to offer advice, etc.

230 PARISH PLAN

The next meeting of the Parish Plan Steering Group would be held on 10 November 2003 when it was hoped progress would be made.

Councillor RA Storrar reported that there had been an inaugural meeting of the Youth Focus Group on 27 October 2003 and it had been very well attended and lots of good ideas had been put forward.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

231 FIVE YEAR PLAN OF ACTION

RESOLVED:

That consideration of the Plan of Action be deferred to the next meeting of the Council scheduled for 1 December 2003 and the following, under the heading of Sports and Recreation, be deleted from the Plan forthwith:

2003/2004 – To pursue the acquisition of Shotwick land, for use as recreational land.

232 ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

The Council received reports on the proceedings of the following meetings by Members who had attended:

(a) Cheshire Association of Town and Parish Councils' AGM held on 16 October 2003

Councillors A Bailey and Mrs J Young had attended.

A report on the Local Authority Review was provided. The consultation period had ended. The Boundary Commission had drawn up its proposals for change, subject to agreement to establish Regional Government and they would be forwarded to the Deputy Prime Minister by 6 December 2003.

There would be a further six week consultation period. Only parameters were being set down at this stage, eliminating some options.

Councillor Kerr reported that there would be no recommendations for unitary authorities based on a single council's boundaries.

The Chairman informed that he had raised concerns over the lateness of the conference papers, the attitude of the Chief Officer and the way that motions were handled. Member Councils were not told what lay behind each motion.

(b) NALC Conference from 3-5 October 2003 in Cardiff

The Chairman had attended this event and he provided Members with a written report which included the following:

- ?? details of keynote speech by Right Honourable Alun Michael MP, Minister for Rural Affairs.
- ?? Quality Council Status
- ?? Vital Villages Initiative
- ?? Community Services Grants and Parish Transport Grants
- ?? Best Newsletter and Website
- ?? Speech by Eric Pickles MP, Shadow Spokesman for Local Government
- ?? Parish Plans

- ?? Communicating with the Local Community
- ?? NALC Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- ?? Concerns over the way the Motions were presented to the NALC AGM
- ?? Workshops on Fund Raising and Training Issues
- ?? Action for Communities in Rural England

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Councillor Bailey be thanked for his informative report; and
- (2) two Members attend the Conference in future and that the cheapest accommodation be sought as it was considered that the Conference hotel was overpriced.

233 FUTURE ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

(a) Chester District Football Association Meeting – 13 November 2003

The Council had been approached by Mr Ian Speed, Honorary Secretary of the Chester District Football Association, and requested that a Council Members attend to make a presentation on Saughall's proposals in respect of the Golden Jubilee Park development.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor A Bailey be requested to attend along with Mr Evans of the Saughall Colts if he was amenable.

(b) Chester City Council's Parish Plans Seminar/Workshop – 4:00-6:00pm on Tuesday, 11 November 2003 in the Vernon Institute, Saughall Gowy Area Committee Meeting

The Chairman had been invited to make a presentation on why the Parish Council had decided to compile a Parish Plan for Saughall. A meeting of the Gowy Area Committee would be held on the rise of the Parish Plan event.

RESOLVED:

That as many Members as possible be requested to attend both events.

234 VERNON INSTITUTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Council received Minutes in respect of the Vernon Institute Management Committee meetings held on 9 September 2003 and 14 October 2003 and noted their content.

The Council was pleased to see that a number of improvements had been made to the Vernon Institute building and that the Management Committee was on a sound financial footing.

215 PARISH COUNCIL SURGERIES

RESOLVED:

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

Date	Member
8 November 2003	Councillor Mrs D Whitton
15 November 2003	Councillor RA Storrar
22 November 2003	Councillor Mrs P Humphrey
29 November 2003	Councillor C Moss

236 CIRCULARS

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

Gravity Engineering Ltd – Skate Parks
Cheshire & District Housing Trust's Annual Report
SMP Playground's – information copy of playground design
Hammonds – Little Chef's transfer of license to Vicki Boulton