

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE
held on 29 January 2004 in the Parish Room, 2 Fiddlers Lane, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor RA Storrar
Councillor A Warrington
Councillor C Wynne-Eyton (Tree Warden)
Councillor Mrs J Young (in the Chair)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

Councillor A Bailey
Councillor A Marsden
Councillor C Moss

2 CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were received.

3 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27 November 2003 be confirmed as a correct record.

4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the Minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

5 ENVIRONMENT ISSUES

(a) Fiddlers Lane Playing Field

It was noted that the play equipment, fencing and access were all in good order but that the seating would need some attention in the Spring. The hedge had been trimmed by Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(b) Tree Warden's Report

The Tree Warden reported that one of the young trees planted in Saughall Hey had been snapped and he would arrange its removal. Also, three trees recently planted in the Golden Jubilee Park had been dug up.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received

(c) Parish Paths Warden's Report

It was noted that the bridge over the brook opposite Overwood House had not been repaired.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the situation with the bridge be noted; and

(2) the Parish Paths Warden's Report be deferred until Councillor Bailey is in attendance at the a meeting.

(d) Vernon Institute Clock – Illumination

Councillor Warrington had a copy of the advice the clockmakers, JB Joyce, had supplied and he had passed it to Councillor C Wynne-Eyton.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor C Wynne-Eyton be requested to investigate the possibility of obtaining enhanced lighting for the Clock.

(e) Passageway – Fieldway

Councillor RA Storrar reported that as long as there was an objection the passageway would not be closed. Chester and District Housing Association had carried out consultations and its findings where that 11 householders wanted the passageway closed whilst 1 didn't.

RESOLVED:

That item be removed from the Committee's agenda for the time being.

(f) Golden Jubilee Park

It was reported that the Awareness Raising Event held on 10 January 2004 had been well attended and gone well.

RECOMMENDED:

That further Awareness Raising Events be held on a regular basis, every three months or so.

(g) 'Step into Cheshire': 18-19 September 2004

Mr Trevor Barnston, Event Director for Cheshire County Council, had written to the Clerk on 15 December 2003 to inform that Cheshire was embarking on a unique project that would culminate on the weekend of 18/19 September 2004 when it was hoped that up to half a million people would participate in a range of outdoor events and activities.

Cheshire enjoyed a wealth of countryside and scenery, stretching from the Irish Sea to the Peak District. This countryside merged with historic market towns giving a special blend and bond between the rural and urban communities in the County.

To enhance this alliance, and to help promote Cheshire's rural attractions to the wider world, there would be a County wide celebration in every community, uniting Cheshire residents and visitors, something never before achieved by any County in Britain.

The idea was that as many organisations and groups as possible would be encouraged to participate by organising their own local events under the 'Step into Cheshire' banner. It was hoped that Parish and Town Councils, along with local groups and organisations, would mobilise communities and individuals to become involved, accessing Cheshire's countryside and market towns using the thousands of miles of paths and bridleways, to the sound of church bells throughout the Shire.

RESOLVED:

That the details of the proposed 'Step into Cheshire' initiative be noted.

(h) Litter Bins

Members agreed between them to check all of the bins in the village and report on their condition at the next meeting.

Councillor RA Storrar reported that he had asked Chester City Council's Dog Warden to provide two dog waste bins on the Ridings Estate. This request was under consideration. Notices would also be displayed to encourage dog owners to clear up after their dogs.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

6 HIGHWAY ISSUES

(a) The Ridings – Overhanging Shrubs

It was reported that the footpath was overhung by garden shrubs making it difficult to pass from numbers 21 to 99 The Ridings.

Councillor Mrs Young had received a complaint about the problem and intended supplying the complainant with a copy of Cheshire County Council's Highways and Contracts booklet so he could contact the relevant officer.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(b) Mobile Speed Warning Sign in Saughall

Members had loaned the speed warning sign in December 2003 as a speed deterrent. The results of the exercise would be fed into the Gowy North Area Committee.

The Council would borrow this equipment again soon.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(c) Hermitage Road Traffic Counts – September 2003

The Committee received a copy of the findings of traffic counts carried out in the village in September 2003.

(d) District Engineer's Site Visit

Councillor A Bailey was arranging a site visit with the District Engineer to check the state of the village's roads and footpaths and to ascertain if any improvements could be carried out.

Councillor RA Storrar reported that the District Engineer has dug up the drain in Fiddlers Lane that had been blocked. It was too early to tell if the problem was now rectified.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the report on the District Engineer's site visit be deferred until the next meeting when Councillor Bailey would be in attendance; and

(2) the drain on Fiddlers Lane by the Golden Jubilee Park continue to be monitored.

(e) Overgrown Hedges on Hermitage Road

The overgrown hedges in the village were to be discussed with the District Engineer at the site visit ((d) refers).

RESOLVED:

That the District Engineer's comments on the hedges on Hermitage Road be reported at the next meeting.

(f) Bus Shelters

(i) Replacement and Repairs

Ms C Garner of Cheshire County Council's Transport Co-ordination Section had reported that she would be writing to local landowners about the bus shelter proposals and to obtain the necessary permission to erect them. She would keep the Council informed of progress.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

(ii) Cleaning

At the request of the Council the Clerk had contacted Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council to ascertain if they would be willing to spray the bus shelters at the Vernon Institute, the Egerton Arms and on Meadows Lane with disinfectant on a monthly basis because they were being used as lavatories.

Mr J Mulholland had replied informing that he would undertake this work for an additional £25 per month plus VAT.

RECOMMENDED:

That Council agree to having the three bus shelters sprayed on a monthly basis for a six month period and then review the situation after that.

(g) Proposal to Erect Bollards on the Verge in Long Lane to Prevent Car Parking

It was noted that this proposal would be discussed further with the District Engineer when he made his site visit.

RESOLVED:

That the item be deferred until the next meeting of the Committee and consideration be given to taking soundings on the proposal at the Council's next Awareness Raising Event.

(h) Proposed Evening and Sunday Bus Service Cuts by Cheshire County Council

Councillor RA Storrar reported on the proceedings of the recent Chester and District Public Transport Liaison Committee when the proposed bus service cuts were consulted upon. The proposal was that there would be no bus service after

20:45hrs. The last bus from Chester would depart at 20:15hrs. The Liaison Committee opposed this proposal.

Councillor RA Storrar also reported that the Cheshire Association of Town and Parish Councils would also be opposing bus service cuts as they would have a disastrous effect on outlying areas.

Any bus service subsidised by more than £2 per passenger per journey was at risk. The proposal was a cost cutting exercise because Cheshire County Council was required to make budgetary cuts.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Council give further consideration to this matter at its next meeting on 2 February 2004.