

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE
held on 26 February 2004 in the Parish Room, 2 Fiddlers Lane, Saughall

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

7 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

Councillor C Moss

8 CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were received.

9 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 29 January 2004 be confirmed as a correct record subject to the following amendment:

Minute No 5(e) – Passageway – Fieldway – being amended to read – that as long as there was an objection it was unlikely that the passageway would be closed.

10 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

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

11 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 was worn and the rubber split on one of the junior swings. The 'Horses Forbidden' sign was reported as being loose in the ground and unsafe.

RESOLVED: That

(1) That the report be noted; and

(2) Members inspect the 'Horses Forbidden' sign and report their findings at the next meeting.

(b) Tree Warden's Report

The Tree Warden reported that he had nothing further to add to the report he had made at the last meeting of the Committee.

(c) Parish Paths Warden's Report

Mr T Leach had informed the Chairman that the Countryside Warden had carried out a lot of work over the last six months and that he was aware of the bridge opposite Overwood House being in a state of disrepair.

(d) Saughall Walking Day

The Chairman proposed that Saturday, 18 September 2004 be designated Saughall Walking Day as part of the Step into Cheshire weekend being co-ordinated by Cheshire County Council.

This Walking Day would be advertised widely and would involve three walks (to be designed) as follows:

- a 1 mile walk
- a 2 miles walk
- a circular route

It was hoped to engage the community in this event for all the family and end all walks at the Greyhound Public House where food and drink would be available.

RESOLVED:

That Saturday, 18 September 2004 be designated Saughall Walking Day.

(e) Vernon Institute Clock – Illumination

Councillor C Wynne-Eyton reported that he had made slow progress. He had found an electrician who was willing to have a look at the Clock but he would be unable to do this for a month or so.

(f) Passageway – Fieldway

The Clerk had received a letter from the Assistant Manager of Chester and District Housing Trust. It informed that the Trust Board had recently approved the Asset Management Strategy that would be taken forward over the coming year. A major part of the work would be to engage the community in each neighbourhood to find out what was needed in the medium to long term. This would be done by holding local meetings and sending to each resident a questionnaire, both would enable the views, concerns and aspirations of the people living in the area to be highlighted. From the results, the Trust and the residents would priorities, plan and programme works.

The Council's request for the passageway to be closed would be added into the results from the consultation.

RESOLVED:

That the situation be noted and the item be removed from future Committee agendas.

(g) Golden Jubilee Park

It was noted that good progress had been made. A further Awareness Raising Event had been held successfully on 21 February 2004. Comments and observations received from local residents had been taken into account and the site layout plan revised accordingly.

The amended plans would be submitted to the Planning Authority soon. Funding opportunities were being considered and the Business Plan to aid funding opportunities was nearing completion.

A dog had received an injury to its paw as a result of broken glass on the field. Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council Officers had agreed to be extra vigilant and pick up as much glass left on the field as possible.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

(h) Litter Bins

The litter bin on Church Road was damaged beyond repair and needed replacing as litter was strewn around the bus stop area.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to liaise with Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council Officials over a vandal proof replacement bin.

(i) The Ridings Primary School – Reserve Land

A resident of Darlington Crescent was concerned that the grass on the School's Reserve Land would be cut back at the wrong time. She considered it to be a small nature reserve.

The land belonged to the Local Education Authority and grass cutting was carried out by Cheshire County Council Officials.

RESOLVED:

That the resident be advised to discuss her concerns with Cheshire County Council's Education Officers.

(j) Unsafe Gravestones

Councillor Warrington reported that some of the gravestones in the closed cemetery behind his house appeared to be leaning.

Councillor RA Storrar agreed to find out which Chester City Council Officer had responsibility for this cemetery so that the Clerk could write expressing the Council's concerns.

RESOLVED:

That the situation be noted.

12 HIGHWAY ISSUES

(a) Mobile Speed Warning Sign in Saughall

The Chairman reported on the findings of an investigation carried out by Councillors using the mobile speed warning sign on loan from Chester City Council.

It was noted that 95% of vehicles using Hermitage Road travelled at speeds of more than 35 miles per hour. There had been little speeding on Church Road but it was considered that this was because of the number of parked cars on the road that served to calm the traffic.

The Council would have use of the mobile speed warning sign again and when it did it was hoped to use it on Sea Hill Road (before Sea Hill Farm at the top of the hill) and by the Peg on Hermitage Road.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(b) Drain in Fiddlers Lane near the Playing Field

The situation was being monitored, until there was a lot of rain it was difficult to tell if the improvements carried out by the District Engineer had worked.

(c) District Engineer's Site Visit

The visit had not taken place. The District Engineer had not contacted the Chairman as requested.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to ask the District Engineer to contact the Chairman by phone at his home the following day.

(d) Overgrown Hedges

The hedge on the stretch of road from Wash Hall to the Saughall boundary had been trimmed.

There was a problem with the fencing (posts were rotten) and brambles between the Egerton Arms Public House and the houses at the end of Hermitage Road. Councillor Mrs Young informed that she had not yet delivered the letters to those with overgrown foliage on the Ridings Estate.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the reports be received; and
- (2) the problem with fencing and brambles be considered as part of the District Engineer's site visit.

(f) Bus Shelters

The Clerk had received invoices in the sum of £634.50 for the bus shelter maintenance and £76.38 for removal of the flagstone base at the bus terminus from Mr B Ebbrell.

It was not known if Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council had started to spray the bus shelters yet as per instructions.

The Clerk reported that the Countryside Agency, who was providing 10% of the funding in respect of the second phase of the bus shelter scheme, were continuing to raise concerns that the work had still not been carried out.

Cheshire County Council, who was providing 90% of the funding and arranging the erection of the new bus shelters, had indicated that until agreement was received from local landowners that the bus shelter be sited on their land, the work could not go ahead. A response from each of the relevant landowners was awaited.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the invoice for bus shelter repairs be considered at the next meeting of the Council on 1 March 2004;
- (2) the Clerk be requested to check with Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council Officials to ascertain whether the spraying of bus shelters has commenced; and
- (3) Mrs C Garner of Cheshire County Council's Transport Co-ordination Service be asked for a progress report on and timescales for completion of the Bus Shelter Scheme.

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

RESOLVED:

That a decision on this matter be deferred until next year.

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

A decision was awaited from Cheshire County Council.

However, Councillor RA Storrar reported that, informally, he had heard that because of the pressure put on the County Council it was rethinking its evening bus cuts proposal. It was also noted that the County Council had held its Budget meeting and set its budget.

RESOLVED:

That a formal response be awaited.