

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE
held on 25 March 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

Invited Member: Councillor Mrs JE Storrar

13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

Councillor C Moss

14 CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were received.

15 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 February 2004 be confirmed as a correct record.

16 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

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

17 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 very loose and Members deemed it unsafe.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the report be noted; and

(2) the Clerk be requested to ask Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council to either secure the 'Horses Forbidden' sign in the ground, if it is possible, and if it is not, remove the pole and retain the sign for mounting on the fence.

(b) Tree Warden's Report

The Tree Warden reported that a tree had been uprooted in Greenway and been disposed of.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(c) Parish Paths

The Committee was asked to consider if any improvements could be made to the local footpath network or whether there was a pathway that could be re-designated as a permissive right of way.

Members were also informed of the routes for the three organised walks that would take place on Saturday, 18 September 2004, "Saughall Walking Day", as part of the "Step into Cheshire" initiative. They were:

- ? Beating the Boundaries
- ? Castle Way – walk back into history
- ? Woodland Way – for children

The Footpath Warden and the Ranger would mark the routes and the Guides would arrange a Treasure Hunt in respect of the children's walk. There would be no walking on the main roads following advice from the District Engineer and detours would be arranged with local landowners. There would be also a cycle trek arranged on Sunday, 19 September 2004 as part of the "Step into Cheshire" initiative.

Members discussed arrangements as follows:

- ? Sponsorship would be sought to buy the T-shirts.
- ? An entrance fee would be paid and entrants would be supplied with a T-shirt and a map.
- ? The two Headteachers in the village would be asked to promote the weekend and activities and encourage the children to take part.
- ? Arrangements would be made for car parking and registration at the Vernon Institute, if possible.
- ? Certificates to be provided for Beating the Boundaries.
- ? Local historians to be invited to lead the Castle Way Walks.
- ? A stall would be taken at the village fete on 3 July 2004 to raise awareness of the events planned for 18 and 19 September 2004.
- ? Walks would end at the Greyhound Public House where food would be available.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Assistant Countryside Access Officer be informed that there were no pathways in Saughall that could become permissive footpaths to improve the local public footpath network;
- (2) the initial ideas and suggestions for the Walks and cycle trek on 18 and 19 September 2004 be noted, further discussed and firmed up; and
- (3) Council be **RECOMMENDED** to make a financial donation to assist arrangements for this weekend from its proceeds from selling the Parish Paths booklet.

(d) Vernon Institute Clock – Illumination

The Chairman informed of an approach by Mr Parry who wanted to improve the illumination of the clock. He had been given the go ahead.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Warrington be requested to ascertain if progress had been made.

(e) Golden Jubilee Park

Councillor Mrs Young informed that she was concerned about the access and parking arrangements for the contractors when the development work began.

RESOLVED:

That, if necessary, once the development work begins on the Golden Jubilee Park, the Uniform Groups be requested to relocate to the Vernon Institute for a few weeks in the interests of health and safety.

(f) Litter Bins

Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council had informed that to supply and install a replacement litter bin on Church Road there would be a charge of £312.00 plus VAT. It was suggested that a Glasdon “Metal Guppy” litter bin should be supplied with ‘Fire Expire’ fitted to the bin lid.

It was noted that contractors carrying out work at the Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School had squashed the litter bin outside the School on Church Road.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council be requested to install the bin as soon as possible; and

(2) County Councillor D Rowlands be informed about the damage to the bin outside the Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School and asked to put arrangements in hand to replace it.

(g) Unsafe Gravestones

It was noted that the gravestones had now been made safe.

(h) Saughall's Tidy Village Competition

As the Council had decided not to enter the Cheshire Community Council's Best Kept Village/Civic Pride Competition, Members considered what could be done to improve the look of the village.

RESOLVED:

That Council be **RECOMMENDED** to make a donation of at least the cost of entering the Best Kept Village/Civic Pride Competition to the Gardening Club to be used to provide prizes for the Best Kept Front Garden Competition.

(i) Garage Turning Area, Meadows Lane

A local resident had informed that work was needed to improve the surface of the garage turning area. The Clerk had tried to get help from the District Engineer but he was unable to assist.

Councillor RA Storrar had informed the Chester and District Housing Trust whose responsibility the garages were. It was hoped that the Trust would take the necessary action when finances permitted.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to inform the resident of the action taken by the Council.

12 HIGHWAY ISSUES

(a) Heavy Traffic in Saughall

It was reported that Gleeson's were accessing its housing development via Church Road and Sea Hill Road. It had also put up illegal signage to advertise its new houses. The District Engineer had removed the signs.

PC Robin Fisher had offered advice in the light of the weight restriction on the bridge.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the situation be noted; and

(2) PC Fisher's advice be taken.

(b) Drain in Fiddlers Lane near the Playing Field

The District Engineer had informed the Chairman that the drain had been moved because the pole had gone through hit. The problem was now solved.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(c) District Engineer's Site Visit

The District Engineer had met with the Chairman on Tuesday, 23 March 2004 for a site visit. Areas covered and discussed were:

- ? Sea Hill Road/Hermitage Road – lack of consultation over the resurfacing work/road closures.
Some parts would be left un-surfaced and the District Engineer would undertake this work.
- ? A540 boreholes complete – no timescales yet for improvement works. There would be a meeting with the District Engineer to discuss the work and the Chairman would be invited.
- ? Hedgerow at the Egerton Arms Public House was the landowners responsibility .
- ? Drainage on Hermitage Road was poor – a lot of surface water when it rained.
- ? Fiddlers Lane to Kingswood Lane road surface was poor, the edging was deteriorating. The District Engineer had a bid in for resurfacing work but did not know if it had been successful yet.
- ? Hedges on Hermitage Road outside Horseshoe Cottage were dangerous and the District Engineer would take appropriate action.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the report be received; and

(2) the Clerk be requested to write to Mr A Stilwell, the County Engineer, informing him of the Council's displeasure at not being consulted about the forthcoming road closures.

(d) Overgrown Hedges

Councillor Mrs J Young reported that she had delivered letters to all residents with overgrown hedges on the Ridings Estate.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(e) Bus Shelters

(i) New Scheme

It was reported that a copy of the detailed design drawings had been sent to the Solicitor acting on behalf of the landowners and the Clerk by the County Council's Transport Co-ordination Section.

Unfortunately, because the necessary approvals had not been obtained to date (it was hoped that they would be still forthcoming) there was no possibility of constructing the shelters in this financial year. However, as long as the Parish Council was agreeable progress would be made towards the earliest implementation in the new year. The Clerk had confirmed that this was acceptable under the circumstances.

RESOLVED:

That the position be noted.

(ii) Maintenance

The Clerk had received a letter from the Transport Co-ordination Section informing that payment of £500.00 was required in respect of the maintenance of the two bus shelters installed by Cheshire County Council in partnership with the Parish Council. An invoice would be despatched for the said amount before the end of the financial year.

RESOLVED:

That the invoice be awaited.

(iii) Cleaning

Although the Clerk had enquired a number of times Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council had not informed her whether the monthly bus shelter spraying had commenced.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to find out if bus shelter spraying had begun.

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

No formal decision on bus cuts had been conveyed to the Clerk by Cheshire County Council as yet.

RESOLVED:

That the position be noted.