

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held on 24 March 2005 in the Parish Room, 2 Fiddlers Lane, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor A Bailey (in the Chair)
Councillor R Shukla
Councillor RA Storrar
Councillor C Wynne-Eyton
Councillor Mrs M Wynne-Eyton
Invited Member: Councillor Mrs JE Storrar

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor Mrs J Young

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 18 November 2004 be confirmed as a correct record.

4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute No 54/2004 – Seating

The wrong fittings had been supplied with the community seats.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor RA Storrar be requested to investigate the situation and arrangements be made to lay a concrete base on Church Road (opposite the Woodvale Store) once the seat is ready to be put into position.

5 ODD JOBS

The Council needed someone to carry out odd jobs and in particular joinery work around the village.

RESOLVED:

That this be the subject of an agenda item at the next Council meeting and an article be included in the Parish Newsletter.

6 VERNON INSTITUTE BUILDING

The Clerk had invited representatives of the Vernon Institute Management Committee to attend the meeting to discuss with Members the Vernon Institute's Work Programme, refurbishment and costings.

RESOLVED:

That as no representatives of the Vernon Institute Management Committee were in attendance this item be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.

7 PARISH NEWSLETTER

The Clerk presented the Parish Newsletter in draft for discussion, amendment and additions.

The Chairman reminded the Committee that one of the tests to be met to gain Quality Parish Council Status was that the Council must produce four newsletters a year. He proposed that in future he would be the Newsletter's Editor and that Councillor Mrs JE Storrar would be the Sub-Editor. They would submit items in their final form to the Clerk who would remain responsible for the Newsletters co-ordination and publication.

The Newsletter would now be finalised and enough copies obtained for every house in the village.

The Chairman had some new items in mind for future Newsletters and they included an introduction to Members (two at a time with photographs) and Cheshire Waste Recycling Strategy.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Clerk make the necessary arrangements for printing the April 2005 Newsletter so that it can be distributed by volunteers to all households in Saughall and Shotwick Park at the same time as the Parish Plan Snapshot Report;
- (2) the arrangements proposed by the Chairman for the production of future Newsletters be endorsed; and
- (3) Council be **RECOMMENDED** to give consideration to paying the Uniform Groups (to assist their fundraising activities) an appropriate amount to distribute future editions of the Newsletter to all households in Saughall and Shotwick Park.

8 COMMUNITY WARDENS SCHEME

Chester City Councillor Mia Jones had sent the Clerk information, as requested, on her Council's Community Wardens Scheme. This had included details of the role, possible powers, initial deployment 'policy' and the project development timetable.

The proposal was to start with a small team. The new Warden Service would be available district wide but would be deployed intelligently through Police joint tasking and co-ordination, and community and members requests.

It was currently not possible to guarantee any area of the district a specific level of service but the City Council was conscious that both the urban and rural areas were most in need of this type of service. It would work alongside Police Officers and ultimately follow their neighbourhood policing model as its resources grew.

It was a little early in the development of the Service to seek funding for an “enhanced provision” from Parish Councils until the City Council had a better understanding of the needs of each area/community and what the normal service levels were that it should be delivering to them anyway. There was also the issue in respect of double taxation and the current debate was taking place within the City Council.

Members noted that there would be Service Level Agreements with Blacon, Lache and Hoole but that there would be Strategic Deployment if evidence was presented of “hot spots”.

The Parish Council wanted to see a Warden in the village who would engage proactively with youngsters. It was considered that one way forward may be to work in partnership and group financial resources with neighbouring Parish Councils.

RESOLVED:

That Chester City Councillor Mia Jones be thanked for the information she has supplied and be asked to keep the Parish Council informed so that it can learn from the experience obtained in other areas of the District.

9 SAUGHALL HEY – ACCESS FOR EMERGENCY VEHICLES

At the last meeting of the Council Mrs Howden from Saughall Hey had spoken to Members about the tragic consequences that had resulted from an ambulance not being able to access her house to take her son to hospital. It had become stuck on the grass there had been a delay as another ambulance had to be dispatched.

Members had promised Mrs Howden that they would consider the situation and take any action they considered appropriate.

Consequently, the Committee gave serious consideration to the accessibility of Saughall Hey to the Emergency Services.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Clerk be requested to write to the Police, Fire and Ambulance Services to ascertain their advice on the access and informing them of the tragic situation that had been experienced earlier this year;
- (2) Councillor RA Storrar be requested to provide the Clerk with a map; and
- (3) on receipt of this advice, the Clerk be requested to write as appropriate to all residents of Saughall Hey following further discussions by this Committee.

- 10 CONSULTATIONS ON:
(1) Chester City Council's Revised Race Equality Scheme
(2) Chester City Council's Corporate Equality Policy

RESOLVED:

That the detail set out in the consultation documents be noted.

- 11 OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER'S CONSULTATION ON:
(1) Citizen Engagement and Public Service. Why Neighbourhoods Matter; and
(2) Vibrant Local Leadership

RESOLVED:

That the detail set out in the consultation documents be noted.

- 12 PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS BUS SHELTER SCHEME 05/06

The Clerk reported that she had received an e-mail from Ms Laura Hope of Cheshire County Council's Transport Co-ordination Service on 21 March 2005 regarding the Bus Shelter Scheme.

Ms Hope had asked if the Parish Council had any further outstanding parish schemes to be progressed in 05/06. If the Parish Council was interested in progressing further schemes the Clerk was asked to provide the relevant information of its proposed sites as soon as possible as work was already ongoing.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to inform Ms Hope that the Council was interested in progressing Bus Shelter Schemes at the end of Rakeway and at the bottom of Church Road (by the Vernon Institute) to replace bus shelters that were in a very poor condition.

- 13 SHOOTING ON THE SHOTWICK PARK ESTATE

At the last meeting of the Council, Councillor Kerr had raised concerns over regular weekend shooting on the Shotwick Park Estate.

The Clerk had subsequently contacted the County Property Manager, Mr Ian Gould, to find out if anyone had permission to shoot on the Estate.

The Clerk had received an e-mail from Mr Robin Barnett, one of Mr Gould's Officers, informing that there was a shooting agreement with a particular tenant on the Shotwick Park Estate. Mr Barnett was willing to contact this tenant to find out if he had been shooting recently as the people spotted on the land may have been there without permission. He also wanted to know why the shooting activity was considered dangerous by the Parish Council.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to respond to Mr Barnett requesting that he ascertain whether or not it was his particular tenant involved in the shooting activity and telling him that this shooting activity was dangerous to footpath users who were in the line of fire!

14 NORTH GOWY AREA COMMITTEE

Councillor RA Storrar presented the Clerk with the necessary information for her to make a bid to the North Gowy Area Committee for multi-play equipment for the Golden Jubilee Park.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee was scheduled for Thursday, 19 May 2005 the same evening as the Area Committee.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Clerk be requested to make the funding application to the Area Committee using the information supplied by Councillor RA Storrar; and
- (2) the next meeting of this Committee be rescheduled at the Annual Council Meeting.