

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH  
COUNCIL held on 9 January 2006 at the Vernon Institute, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor WI Humphrey  
Councillor Mrs P Humphrey  
Councillor B Kerr (in the Chair)  
Councillor C Moss  
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar  
Councillor RA Storrar  
Councillor Mrs H Thorniley-Jones  
Councillor A Warrington  
Councillor Mrs D Whitton  
Councillor C Wynne-Eyton (Tree Warden)

Mr T Leach – Parish Paths Warden

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

Councillor Mrs J Johnson  
Councillor Mrs M Wynne-Eyton  
Councillor Mrs J Young

2 COUNCILLOR B KERR OBE

Councillor RA Storrar congratulated the Chairman on being awarded an OBE for services to Local Government in the new Year's Honours List. The Chairman responded as appropriate.

3 CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were received.

4 PARISH PATHS

The Parish Paths Warden reported that he had walked all public footpaths and rights of way in the Parish over the last week or so. The majority of these were in good condition but there were one or two areas where it was virtually impossible to walk because of heavy mud e.g. Green Farm.

Land of Kingswood Lane, beyond the kennels, had been deliberately churned up by heavy machinery to stop the pathway from being used as a "rat run" to Blacon. It was agreed that this was best left alone.

All stiles were in good repair and it was noted that the surface of the pathway that went directly across the field passed Shotwick House was now much improved.

Pleasant View Farm had installed illegal electric fencing and there had been no animals in the field concerned for sometime. The Parish Paths Warden undertook to inform Cheshire County Council's Ranger, Steve Holden, of this issue and he would take any necessary action.

The Old Coach Road continued to be used by youngsters on motorbikes.

RESOLVED:

That the Parish Paths Warden be thanked for attending the meeting and his informative report.

5 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the following amendment, the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 5 December 2005 be confirmed as a correct record:

Minute No 227(b) – Attendance at Meetings of Outside Bodies - Gowy North Area Committee on 1 December 2006

First sentence replace Councillor A Warrington's name with that of Councillor RA Storrar.

6 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute No 214 – Matters Arising from the Minutes – Minute No 202 – Highway Issues – (d) Parking on Church Road

The Chairman had spoken to the District Engineer, Mr Graham Anderton, about the congestion and problems caused by parked cars on Church Road. He had advised that this was a policing issue.

A meeting had been held with Inspector Woodward where it had been agreed that a "walkabout" would be arranged for the Chairman, the Inspector and a Police Constable with responsibilities for Saughall and the Church Road situation would be discussed at that time.

The Chairman reported that the Council had received a letter dated 3 January 2006 from the proprietor of Saughall Service Station concerning traffic congestion on Church Road. He had read the column in the Chester Chronicle that was made up of extracts from the Council's Minutes without any consultation or enquiry. The proprietor was concerned and disappointed with the negative comments he had encountered in the newspaper. He emphasised that the cars left by customers were parked as soon as possible at the rear of the garage and the proprietor and his staff did all that they could to contribute to the local community.

It was agreed that the Clerk would respond to the letter from the proprietor of Saughall Service Station informing that the Chester Chronicle had not discussed the problems on Church Road with the Council so consequently the column in question did not reflect the actual position.

The Council had received complaints about the congestion caused at peak times by parked vehicles along Church Road. No action had been taken other than to monitor the situation. The proprietor would be assured that the Council would take no action or support any action that was detrimental to his business.

The Council valued the contributions made by local business and commended the Service Station for the financial support it recently gave to the Vernon Institute.

Minute No 223(d) – Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) – A540 Parkgate Road, Saughall: A5117 to Long Lane

This matter was to have been discussed at the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee but as the Clerk had asked for the meeting to be put back to 26 January 2006 it was appropriate to discuss it now.

The Council agreed that it was imperative that the District Engineer, Mr Graham Anderton, provided appropriate signage whilst work was ongoing to deter through traffic. It was also important not to commence work on the A540 until other roadworks were completed on the A550.

The Clerk was requested to inform the District Engineer of the signage proposed by the Council and ask him to speak to the Chairman if he was in any doubt of what was required.

Minute No 227(b) - Gowry North Area Committee on 1 December 2006

The Chairman informed that he had drafted a letter concerning double taxation and Chester City Council's grant. It was also noted that this matter was on the agenda for this meeting at item No 9(d) as a letter on this subject had been received from Mr Bob Armitage, Chairman of the Chester Area Meeting. This would be discussed later.

Minute No 255 – Odd Jobs

The Chairman reported that the District Engineer, Mr Graham Anderton, had discussed the possibility of the Council siting a community seat near the gate of the Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School with representatives of the School's Governing Body. Unfortunately, the Governors were not amenable to the proposal.

Consequently, the Council would have to move to its fallback position and locate the seat on the grassed area at the junction of Saughall Hey and Church Road.

It was agreed that the Chairman would discuss the exact location with Councillor C Moss who in turn would issue instructions to Mr H Wilkinson who would carry out the work.

## 7 GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK DEVELOPMENT

### (a) Letter from WREN

The Clerk had included a copy of the letter dated 22 November 2005 from Wren's Northern Area manager, Simon Settle, with the agenda for the Members' information.

The funding offer of £25,000 had been withdrawn and would be written back into Wren's Cheshire budget to be spent on other eligible projects. It was possible to re-apply for the revised project.

(b) Funding the Golden Jubilee Park Project

The Chairman reminded the Council that the land on Fiddlers Lane would have been in the Council's ownership for four years in May 2006. Consequently, serious endeavours must be made this year to complete the development work necessary. Delay was encouraging "fly tipping".

The Council would have to be prepared to finance the project out of the precept in the knowledge that it could still apply for grant aid. A loan from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) could be taken out over 20 years or more and this would mean that future generations would make a financial contribution.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) future work in the Golden Jubilee Park be funded from the parish precept;  
and
- (2) (1) above be by the means of a loan application to the PWLB to be repaid over a period to be determined.

8 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

RESOLVED:

That Standing Orders be suspended and members of the public in attendance be allowed to take part in the discussions and deliberations in respect of the next item of business (Minute No 9/2006) and they also be suspended in relation to the item after that (Minute No 10/2006) to allow the Council to rescind a decision made less than six months ago.

9 GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK DEVELOPMENT – HOW TO MAKE PROGRESS

**[Mr D Bird (Project Co-ordinator), Mr DJ Francis (preferred contractor), and Mr B Huxley (Saughall Cricket Club) in attendance for this item.]**

(a) Work Required and Tenders/Quotations Received

The Clerk reminded the Council that she, at the request of the Council, had written to Mr DJ Francis to inform him that he was the preferred contractor and that his tender for high quality drainage work had been accepted at the Council meeting on 30 August 2005 (Minute No 151/2005 refers).

The Clerk had also requested further quotations for additional work and prices had been provided in the sum of £1,540 + VAT for the work detailed below:

- ? Provide and erect fencing in front of No 2 gate
- ? Tarmac section of pathway to permit vehicles and equipment onto central area
- ? Tarmac from No 1 gate to perimeter path
- ? Extend path from the front of Uniform Group Headquarters to connect with perimeter path

The Chairman reported that the cheaper drainage option would cost £34,000 but this did not include any work in respect of the cricket wicket. This must be financed separately. To roll and seed the field would cost approximately £13,000.

Consequently, if the Council agreed to the option not to include drainage all work detailed would cost approximately £15,000 + VAT (which could be reclaimed).

Also, Mr DJ Francis had indicated that he would lay a hard surface behind the Uniform Group's Headquarters and make and install a basketball frame and net at a cost of £4,025.

As the proposal to include football pitches on the land had now been shelved it was generally agreed that the current standard of drainage was acceptable for the sporting activities to be carried out on the land.

Members agreed that it would be appropriate to tarmac the perimeter path at a future date.

**RESOLVED:** That Council be **RECOMMENDED** to

- (1) agree the option to complete the necessary work in the Golden Jubilee Park without undertaking anymore drainage work; and
- (2) accept the tenders/quotations received from Mr DJ Francis and detailed above.

(b) Diversion of Overhead Electrical Cables

The Clerk had kept up the pressure on Powersystems and this had paid off. The Council would give permission for Powersystems to put the power cables underground, using the shortest possible route across its land so long as appropriate marker posts were provided.

A consent form and plans had been received and Powersystems would also need the consent of a neighbouring landowner to bury cables on his land and this was in progress.

**RESOLVED:**

That Council be **RECOMMENDED** to sign the Wayleave agreement and return it to Powersystems.

(c) Other Funding Opportunities

Mr B Huxley informed that the Saughall Cricket Club had made a bid to the Lords Taverners for £3,000 to part fund an artificial pitch. This left £4,700 to find and it was proposed that the Council, as landowner, make an application to Awards for All for this amount.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Clerk be requested to make a funding application to Awards for All under Mr Huxley's guidance.

10 GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK DEVELOPMENT – THE COUNCIL'S NEXT STEPS

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the decision of the Council made at its meeting on 30 August 2005 to accept the quotation from Mr DJ Francis for high quality drainage work (Minute No 151/2005 refers) be rescinded;
- (2) the recommendations detailed in Minute No 9 above be endorsed;
- (3) the Clerk be requested to inform the preferred contractor to proceed on the basis of the alternate scheme;
- (4) a meeting be arranged between the Chairman, the Project Co-ordinator and the preferred contractor to agree a timescale for the work;
- (5) provision be made in the Council's budget to finance the scheme; and
- (6) the Chairman and the Clerk be requested to work up and submit a funding bid to Cheshire County Council's Innovations Fund in respect of the proposed basketball facility.

11 POLICE/HOMEWATCH

(a) Crime and Disorder

It was reported that there had been a commendable police response when an elderly gentleman had not secured his property.

It was also noted that the police had patrolled the village on New Year's Eve.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(b) Meeting with Inspector Woodward

A very constructive meeting had been held with Inspector Woodward on Friday, 6 January 2006 with the majority of Parish Councillors in attendance.

Inspector Woodward was responsible for policing 16 Wards of Chester City Council. Within a fortnight Inspector Woodward would have in place an Officer with specific responsibilities for Saughall. This Officer, along with the Sergeant and Inspector Woodward, would walk the village. (Minute No 6/2006, para 3 refers) This might help forge a good working relationship.

The police would visit Saughall in the next few weeks and ticket anyone parked illegally.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(c) Chester Police Forum 2006/2007 – Meeting Schedule

RESOLVED:

That Members put the future dates of Police Forum meetings in their diaries.

(d) Draft Policing Objectives 2006/07 - Consultation

RESOLVED:

That this matter be referred to the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

## 12 ACCOUNTS

(a) Payments made since the meeting of the Council held on 5 December 2005:

<u>Financial Year 2005/2006</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>Cheque No</u>
Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council (Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleaning)	1,049.67	101844
Mr H Wilkinson (odd jobs in swing park)	47.50	101845
Hacker Young (Annual Audit of Accounts)	317.25	101846
Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council (Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleaning)	1,049.67	101847
K2 Network Services Ltd (2 toner cartridges And 2 boxes of white A4 paper)	159.81	101848
Mr C Moss (Parish Room rent)	312.50	101849
Mrs S Hudspeth (Exp)	54.48	101850
Inland Revenue	789.96	101851
Mrs S Hudspeth (Sal)	572.12	101852
Mr H Wilkinson (odd jobs – repairs to notice board At the Ridings Community Infant School)	18.75	101853

(b) Receipts

Interest to 21 December 2005 (14 Day Account)	50.15
Interest to 23 December 2005 (Treasurer Account)	0.14

(c) Annual Audit of Accounts 2005/2005 – Notice of Conclusion

RESOLVED:

That it be noted that the External Auditors, Hacker Young, have given the Council a “clean” report.

(d) Double Taxation and Chester City Council's Grant

The Council considered a letter from Mr Bob Armitage, Chairman of the Cheshire Association of Local Councils Chester Area Meeting. He urged Parish Council's in the Chester District to lobby and write to the leader of Chester City Council, Councillor David Evans, raising concerns at the rumour that the City Council's Cabinet was proposing that the grant in respect of double taxation for 2006/07 should be the same as last year.

RESOLVED:

That the letter drafted by the Chairman and referred to at Minute No 6/2006 be dispatched to Councillor David Evans.

13 PARISH COUNCIL SURGERIES

The Council was informed that Mr Butler had attended the last Parish Council Surgery to inform of his interest in modernising the Council's swing park used by younger children of the village.

It was noted that the Council had a savings fund it was building up to replace its play equipment. The amount put aside plus a loan from the PWLB was a possibility to fund the modernisation of the play equipment in the shorter term.

It was noted that Chester City Council had carried out an Annual Inspection of the playground and this would be considered at the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The findings of the report may lead the Council to take certain actions.

It was also noted that a lot of glass had been left on the field.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report on the proceedings of the last Council Surgery be received;
- (2) the possibility of modernising the swing park be discussed at the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee;
- (3) Councillor WI Humphrey be requested to preside over the next Parish Council Surgery on Saturday, 4 February 2006 between 10:00am and 10:45am in the Parish Room, 2 Fiddlers Lane, Saughall; and
- (4) further consideration be given to the times, days and venues for Parish Council Surgeries when the Council's Schedule of Meetings is agreed at the Annual Council meeting in May 2006 and new ideas be tried out.

14 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 9 January 2006 be received; and



- (2) to assist the Clerk, the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee scheduled for 29 January 2006 be re-scheduled and held at 7:30pm on Thursday, 26 January 2006 in the Parish Room and Councillor C Moss be invited to attend.

15 CHESTER CITY COUNCIL – PLANNING

The Council considered a letter sent to all Parish Council Chairmen in the Chester District by the Chairman of Barrow Parish Council Ms Ann Faulkner. Ms Faulkner's letter, dated 17 December 2005, set out her Council's concerns and experiences at the hands of Chester City Council's Planning Officers and asking if Parish Councils were willing to support Barrow Parish Council in a vote of no confidence in Chester City Council's Planners.

This Council too had various concerns over the way the Planning Authority dealt with it, particularly in respect of its inability or determination not to communicate effectively with it.

Consequently, following deliberation it was

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Clerk be requested to respond to the Chairman of Barrow Parish Council informing her that this Council has full sympathy with some of her concerns, it shares her frustrations over Officers' frequent inadequacies and in their constant failure to respond to correspondence and is happy to support her Council in a vote of no confidence in the Planners; and
- (2) a Village Design Statement be the subject of discussion at the next meeting of the Council.

16 VERNON INSTITUTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

There was no report available.

17 ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

- (a) Annual Town and Parish Council's Conference, Wednesday, 8 February 2006 in the Tenant's hall, Tatton Park, near Knutsford, 7:30pm (light refreshments from 6:30pm)

RESOLVED:

That Councillors B Kerr and WI and Mrs P Humphrey be requested to attend this event to represent the Council.

- (b) Chester City Council's External Funding Section's Training Event on the Big Lottery Fund and Outcome Funding, Thursday, 2 February 2006, Chester Town Hall, 10:00am to 4:00pm - £25

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk make the necessary arrangements for Councillor WI Humphrey to attend.

(c) Chester Police Forum

Councillor Mrs JE Storrar reported on proceedings at the last Forum meeting. There had been considerable discussion on the Police Authority's budget and on setting its precept.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

18 COMMUNICATION RECEIVED

The following communications had been received:

- Rural Regeneration Unit – Fresh Food Co-operatives in Cheshire – canvassing views – questionnaire to be completed

The community is well served in this area and have no need of a co-operative.

- Chester City Council's Executive Summery – Chester District 2004
- Housing Needs Survey

The senior Reservation Officer be invited to attend a future meeting.

- Chester City Council – Notification of Appeal Against Enforcement Notice – Northfield, Rose Farm, Parkgate Road, Woodbank

Noted.

- Configuration of NHS – Ambulance Trusts in England – Consultation Document – consultation period 14 weeks from 14 December 2005 to 22 March 2006

Agreed not to respond.

- Consultation on new Strategic Health Authority arrangements in the North West of England – Ensuring a patient led NHS – consultation period 14 weeks from 14 December 2005 to 22 March 2006

Agreed not to respond.

- Consultation of New Primary Care Trust Arrangements in Cheshire and Merseyside – Ensuring a patient led NHS – consultation period 14 weeks from 14 December 2005 to 22 March 2006

Agreed not to respond.

19 CIRCULARS

The following circulars had been received, anyone wishing to see a copy would contact the Clerk:

Chester City Council's Gowy North Area Committee – Annual Report  
Chester City Council's Parish Council Services Contact Officers  
Chester CVS – Volunteer Voice December 2005  
Cheshire County Council's Cheshire Matters December 2005  
Cheshire County Council's Cheshire Countryside Events 2006  
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister – Standards of Conduct in English Local Government: The Future  
Cheshire Police Authority – Chester Police Forum  
Cheshire Countryside Events 2006

20 ODD JOBS

Councillor C Moss reported that the notice board at the Ridings Community Infant School had been repaired at a cost of £18.75. It had immediately been vandalised again.

RESOLVED:

That the notice board at the Ridings Community Infant School be removed.

21 PARISH ROOM WINDOW – COMPENSATION CLAIM

Councillor C Moss reported that the Police had informed that they had insufficient information to charge the person responsible for breaking the window in the parish Room with criminal damage. He was being charged with assaulting and obstructing a Police Officer carrying out his duties.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and it be noted that the Council will not receive any compensation for replacing the broken window in the Parish Room.