

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES
COMMITTEE held on 14 August 2006 in the Parish Room, 2 Fiddlers Lane, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor D Holman
Councillor Mrs J Johnson
Councillor B Kerr (in the Chair)
Councillor R Shukla
Councillor Mrs H Thorniley-Jones
Councillor RA Storrar
Councillor Mrs J Young

Invited Guests: Mr G Edwards representing the Greyhound Pub Football Team
Mr B Huxley representing the Saughall Cricket Club
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar

25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A Warrington.

26 CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs H Thorniley-Jones declared a personal interest in any matter involving the Greyhound Pub Football Team.

27 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23 March 2006 be confirmed as a correct record.

28 GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK DEVELOPMENT

(a) Development Work and the Overhead Electrical Cables

Development work could not progress because of the overhead cables. The Clerk had been in communication with both Scottish Power Energy Networks and Energy Watch about their removal. A letter had now been received from Scottish Power informing that the works to joint the underground cables and start removing the existing overhead line would commence on 29 August 2006.

It was noted that because the work had been delayed it might not be possible for the Football Team and Cricket Club to use the facilities from the beginning of next season and alternative arrangements might need to be put in place.

A decision would be taken later whether or not to make a claim to Scottish Power for compensation because of the delay.

(b) Car Parking Provision

The Clerk had written to Mr DJ Francis, the Council's contractor, on 19 July 2006 requesting an indicative quotation in respect of work required on the grassed area to the front of the Uniform Groups' Headquarters on Fiddlers Lane to make it into a car park.

Mr Francis had informed the Chairman that it would cost in the region of £12,000 to put down a stone base or approximately £18,000 if tarmac was laid.

The Council had not budgeted for this work and could not meet the expense of it. Consequently, consideration was given to other options. It was reported that a surface that had been laid at the Police Station in Blacon and also at the University of Chester that might represent a viable alternative.

Councillor Holman **AGREED** to carry out some research at the University and provide the Clerk with a contact name so that she could obtain details with a view to getting a price from the supplier.

It was **AGREED** that once a scheme was in place for car parking it should be submitted to Chester City Council's Planning Department.

(c) Damage to the Uniform Groups' Headquarters

The Council's contractor, Mr DJ Francis, had accidentally caused some damage to a panel of the Uniform Group's Headquarters. Although he had repaired it two of the neighbouring panels were out of alignment. The Chairman **AGREED** to bring this to Mr Francis' attention.

(d) Joint Agreement between the Council and the Two Sporting Organisations

Members considered a draft copy of the Joint Agreement on the use and maintenance of the Golden Jubilee Park and amended it as appropriate.

It was **AGREED** that the revised Joint Agreement would be circulated to Council along with these Minutes (Appendix A) and Council would be **RECOMMEND** to endorse its content and authorise the Chairman to sign it in behalf of the Council.

(e) Grant Aid

(i) Awards for All

Awards for All had written to the Clerk on 14 July 2006 informing that the application for funding had been unsuccessful because:

- Awards of between £500 and £5,000 were made and the Council had requested £8,100
- An award could only be made if it would not be passed on or mainly benefit another organisation

It was noted that another funding bid could be made but it was **AGREED** that the Cricket Club and Football Team would make a joint submission.

(ii) Gowy North Area Committee

It had been reported at the last Council meeting that the Cricket Club and Football Team had been successful, jointly, in attracting funding of £5,000 in the first round of payments from Chester City Council's Gowy North Area Committee. This grant would be used to assist the purchase of equipment to maintain and set up the cricket pitch.

A second round of payments had now been announced and applications were requested by Thursday, 20 October 2006. The Area Committee would make its determination at its meeting on Thursday, 16 November 2006.

The Committee gave consideration to putting together a further funding application. It was **AGREED** that the two Sporting Organisations, sponsored by the Council, would put in a joint bid to the Area Committee to assist the work needed to create a cricket wicket.

(f) Internal Auditor's Report on Accounts 2005/06

At the meeting of the Council held on 3 July 2006 Mr Harry Dobson, the Internal Auditor, had recommended that consideration be given to insuring sports ground surfaces against damage. He had also advised that insurance quotations other than from Cornhills (the Council's current insurer) should be sought in all cases and especially at the renewal stage.

The Committee gave consideration to these requests and **AGREED** that the Clerk, in future years, would be authorised to seek quotations from insurance companies other than Cornhills before renewing the policy. However, it **AGREED** that it would not be necessary to insure the sports ground surfaces. It would prove costly and as the Council had to pay an excess charge in respect of any claim it would probably work out cheaper to just pay to repair any damage inflicted.

29 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S STANDING ORDERS

It was **AGREED** that, as a number of Councillors had forgotten to bring their copies of the Standing Orders with them to the meeting, as indicated on the agenda, the Council be **RECOMMENDED** to adopt the Model Standing Orders provided by the National Association of Local Councils, but any revision of them, to take account of rules and regulations that might be incorporated into them from the Council's own Standing Orders, be considered at the next meeting of the Committee.

30 CHESTER CITY COUNCIL'S CONSULTATION EXERCISES

(a) Gambling Act 2005 – Draft Statement of Principles

It was **AGREED** that as Chester City Council had not provided a complete consultation document consideration of a response be deferred to the next meeting of the Council scheduled for 4 September 2006.

(b) Sports and Leisure Parks

The Committee considered a proposed package of developments drawn up by the Principal Authority in relation to Sports and Leisure Parks.

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would write to the Senior Regeneration Officer informing that Members considered that if the facilities currently enjoyed in the City Centre are to be removed and relocated out of town, then there must be good public transport links in place, otherwise those people who most need these facilities will not be able to access them very easily. If people had to get two buses, one into town and then one out to the Park and the same coming back, it would put them off using it.

Members hoped that the City Council would take its electorate's transport needs on board and put pressure on Chester City Transport, etc. to ensure good direct bus routes/services to its Sports and Leisure Parks for outlying villages.

31 CHESHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS' ANNUAL MEETING 2006
MEMBER COUNCIL MOTIONS

The Committee gave initial consideration to possible Motions the Council could submit for debate at the Annual Meeting on 12 October 2006 at Middlewich Civic Hall. It was noted that the deadline for submissions was Friday, 15 September 2006.

Members were concerned that grass verges in the Chester District were full of weeds. They felt that the City Council should be more proactive in relation to these weeds and ensure that they were sprayed with an effective weed killer at the appropriate time.

Members also wanted to put pressure on the Housing Authority to change its allocation so as to assist/favour local people to stay in the local area.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, be requested to draft two motions for consideration at the next meeting of the Council scheduled for 4 September 2006.

32 HIGHWAY ISSUES

(a) Vehicles Parking in Lane Adjacent to Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School

Members were aware that action in respect of vehicles parking in the lane adjacent to the School had been taken by the Parochial Church Council (PCC). It was **AGREED** to see if a satisfactory outcome was achieved as a result of the PCC's initiative and in the meantime the Council would continue to monitor the situation.

(b) CCTV Saughall Bus Shelter

Ms Christine Garner, Cheshire County Council's Principal Policy and Projects Officer, Transport Co-ordination Services, had written to the Clerk regarding vandalism to the bus shelter on Church Road on 23 April 2006.

Ms Garner informed that the County Council was very disappointed that the outcome wasn't a prosecution to recover the costs of repair, as that was part of the justification of the cost of installing the CCTV system. It was hoped that the footage and information that was captured did assist in identifying the offender and in his admission of guilt.

(c) Bus Terminus – Consultation on the Provision of a Bus Shelter via Cheshire County Council's Bus Shelter Scheme

Ms J Ducey of Cheshire County Council's Engineering Services had written to the Clerk on 13 April 2006 asking if the Council would consider the possibility of providing a lit bus shelter with CCTV at the Terminus under the Parish Shelter Scheme during 2007/08. The Council had considered this proposal and supported it in principle but decided to carry out a consultation exercise with local residents before giving a firm answer.

The consultation had been carried out via the June 2006 Parish Newsletter and Members considered the responses received.

In the light of the responses received it was **AGREED** that the Council could not support the proposal regarding a bus shelter at the Terminus.

(d) Community Speedwatch

Mr Derek Bowker of the Cheshire Community Council had informed the Clerk that he had been in contact with the Roads Liaison Officer about training for Parish Councillors on how to use the speed gun. Once dates were agreed he would contact the Clerk again.

(e) Highways Agency M6 Study – Cheshire's Interim Response

The Committee received a copy of Cheshire County Council's response in respect of the Highways Agency's M6 Study and **NOTED** its contents.

(f) Saughall Hey Junction

The junction had received remedial repair but it had not proved satisfactory. The Chairman had informed the District Engineer, Mr Graham Anderton, and he was making arrangements to carry out further repairs.

33 YOUTH ISSUES

(a) Youth Club

It was **NOTED** that the Youth Club hoped to open on a Wednesday evening from the beginning of September 2006 to cater for younger children. There would be an open evening on 27 September 2006 to launch the Wednesday evening opening.

A new Management Committee was being sought and the vicar would be asked to take up a seat on it.

(b) Request for Funding

The Youth Club wanted the Council to provide a grant of £50 to pay for a visiting drama production that would be touring the County.

It was **AGREED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED** to make a grant to the Youth Club to finance the production, the Vernon Institute booking and appropriate refreshments.

(c) Youth Shelter

The Chairman had arranged with Mr Skippy Roberts of the Cheshire Youth Service for two youth workers to visit Saughall during the following week and consult with the youth of the village on where they would like to see a youth shelter located.

34 GRASSED OPEN AREAS

Mr J Hallas of Darlington Crescent had written to the Chairman asking for the Council's view on an exchange of correspondence between himself and Mr Paul Durham, Chief Executive of Chester City Council, regarding anti-social behaviour on the grassed amenity area behind Wain House. Mr Hallas had suggested that if the grass was allowed to grow to its natural height it would deter youths who congregated there causing a nuisance.

Mr Durham had responded that the course of action put forward by Mr Hallas would not provide a long term solution to the problems being experienced. He also informed that his Council had received complaints from the residents of Wain House when the contractor had failed to cut the grass to specification.

Mr Durham also informed that the incidences of anti-social behaviour had been reported to his Council's Community Warden Team. They would monitor the area and work with the Police to help prevent further incidents and to seek a long term solution.

The Committee deliberated the issues and **AGREED** that Mr Hallas be informed that although Members understood the point being made and the frustration these youngsters caused, it considered that Mr Durham's solution to anti-social behaviour that was regularly experienced on the four green open spaces within the village was the correct approach. Agencies were in place to deal with nuisance youth activity and unruly behaviour.

35 VERNON INSTITUTE CLOCK

At the last meeting of the Committee held on 23 March 2006, Councillor Mrs H Thorniley-Jones had agreed to ascertain from Mr Robert Murphy whether or not it was his intention to continue the work he had started to enhance the lighting on each of the Vernon Institute Clock's faces.

Councillor Mrs H Thorniley-Jones reported that no progress had been made since the last meeting but it was still Mr Murphy's intention to enhance the lighting on each

clock face. When this work was completed he would invoice the Council as previously agreed.

36 PARISH COUNCIL SURGERY

It was **AGREED** that Councillor Mrs J Young would preside over the Council Surgery scheduled for Saturday, 2 September 2006 in the Parish Room, 2 Fiddlers Lane between 10:00am and 10:45am.

JOINT AGREEMENT BETWEEN SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH COUNCIL, SAUGHALL CRICKET CLUB AND THE GREYHOUND PUBLIC HOUSE FOOTBALL TEAM (HEREAFTER REFERRED TO AS SPORTING ORGANISATIONS) ON THE USE AND MAINTENANCE OF THE GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK, FIDDLERS LANE, SAUGHALL

1. The Parish Council, as the owner of the land, will collect a peppercorn rent of £1 per annum from the two Sporting Organisations detailed above for the use of its sports pitches and facilities.
2. In return both Sporting Organisations will be jointly responsible for the maintenance of the land within the curtilage of the perimeter footpath.
3. The cricket square will be roped off and no one, other than those involved in its maintenance, will be allowed access to it between matches. The outfield will form part of the public recreational space.
4. The Football Team will remove and stow away its posts and nets after matches. The pitches will then take the form of open recreational land and will be available to the general public for this purpose.
5. The Sporting Organisations will not erect any storage or other facilities without the permission of the Parish Council and must obtain any required planning consents.
6. When the Sporting Organisations are using the pitches they must ensure that participants, guests, visitors etc use only the parking area, designated for that purpose, by the Council.
7. The Council may make its land available to other sporting and activities, as it deems fit and appropriate.
8. The Park will be available for recreational purposes between the hours of sunrise and sunset.

Signed this.....day of.....2006 on behalf of the Parish Council

Signed this.....day of.....2006 on behalf of the Cricket Club

Signed this.....day of.....2006 on behalf of the Football Team