

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH  
COUNCIL held on 1 December 2008 at the Vernon Institute, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor Mrs P Humphrey  
Councillor Mrs J Johnson  
Councillor JG Johnson  
Councillor B Kerr  
Councillor Mrs J Knox  
Councillor RK Shukla  
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar  
Councillor Mrs H Thorniley-Jones  
Councillor A Warrington  
Councillor Mrs JM Young (in the Chair)

PCSO Mike Butler  
Councillor Eleanor Johnson  
Mr B Huxley, Saughall Cricket Club

262 APOLOGIES FOR AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Apologies for authorised absence were received from Councillors DF Holman, WI Humphrey, RA Storrar and Mrs D Whitton.

263 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Mrs J Knox, RK Shukla and Mrs JE Storrar declared personal interests in respect of the item on the agenda – The New School and the Future of the Thomas Wedge CE (Controlled) Junior School Building (Minute No 273/2008 refers) because of their association with the local schools.

264 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 3 November 2008 be confirmed as a correct record.

242 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

(a) Planning Committee

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 3 November 2008 be received.

(b) Finance and General Purposes Committee

It was reported that the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 6 November 2008 had been inquorate so an informal meeting had taken place.

RESOLVED:

That the notes of the informal meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 6 November 2008 be received and the recommendations contained therein be agreed as follows:

- A bid be submitted for funding from the Cheshire County Council 'Parish Small Grants Scheme' for Countryside Access Improvements
- The Good Neighbour and Community Awards Scheme and application form adopted
- An amendment to the Financial Regulations – Paragraph 11.1(h)
- The Council will hold an annual event e.g. a Cheese and Wine Evening, as a thank you to those people who carry out voluntary work for the benefit of the local community
- The Council will make a financial contribution towards the cost of a Garden of Rest for All Saints Church to be determined at the Budget Council Meeting.

266 COMMUNITIES IN CONTROL: REAL PEOPLE; REAL POWER: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES – A CONSULTATION

The Department of Communities and Local Government's consultation ran until 24 December 2008 and all Members had received a copy.

RESOLVED:

That this Council will make no comments on the Department for Communities and Local Government's consultation.

267 REVIEW OF THE STREET CLEANING CONTRACT

It was reported that Mr Hipkiss, the Council's Street Cleaning Contractor, had agreed to work an additional two hours each week in order to spend more time tidying the Golden Jubilee Park (Minute No 245/2008 refers).

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

268 GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK DEVELOPMENT

(a) Progress Report

The Chairman reported that four benches had now been installed in concrete in the Golden Jubilee Park. The car park continued to be flooded because of the recent inclement weather and a contractor had been asked for his opinion on how to solve this problem and this was awaited.

When sporting organisation were playing matches cars were being parked dangerously on the verges, pavements and kerbs of Fiddlers Lane and Kingston

Court. Consequently, the PCSO was asked to pay this area of the village particular attention on match days. PCSO Mike Butler agreed to this and requested a list of fixtures.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(b) New Play Equipment – 4m High Playnet, Stepping Stones and Balancing Beam

The playnet had now been installed in the Park and the Clerk had made a claim for the £5,000 Chester City Council had allocated for it. The stepping-stones and balancing beam were also now in situ.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the report be received; and

(2) Councillor A Warrington be thanked for liaising with the contractor, Monsterplay Ltd, to ensure that the playnet was installed satisfactorily.

(c) Fiddlers Lane Play Equipment Inspection Reports

(i) Annual Play Inspection

It was reported that Phil Davies of Chester City Council was in discussions with Morral Play Solutions regarding the contract for the Annual Play Equipment Inspections as the City Council's contractor, Andy Wilson-Chalon, had informed that he was not able to carry them out due to ill health. Morral Play Solutions also currently carried out quarterly play equipment inspections under contract for the Parish Council.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to find out when the Annual Play Inspection will take place and cancel a quarterly inspection, if appropriate, to avoid any duplication and to save money.

(ii) The Quarterly Operation Inspection

The Council considered the quarterly report provided after the play area inspection carried out on 31 October 2008 and noted that no action was required currently.

(a) Police

PCSO Mike Butler presented his monthly report on incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour that had occurred in the village over the last month. Set out in the report was details of fuel theft drive-offs from local petrol stations, the theft of a boat that was recovered but the thieves weren't caught and criminal damage to the Ridings Community Infant School.

Since the last meeting there had only been one reported incident of anti-social behaviour and it had occurred in the Golden Jubilee Park. The police had attended and a number of young men had been spoken to.

On 31 October 2008 (Halloween) there had been no reported incidents of nuisance youth activity.

There had been several reports of anti-social behaviour and damage occurring in the bus shelter near to the Church. Local residents were unsure who had been responsible but the possibility that the CCTV camera may have captured some evidence was being explored.

Between 13 and 20 October 2008 the Speed Indicator Device (SID) was used at various locations in Saughall. This provided substantial information on speed trends in the village. The Council had access to the SID again in December 2008 but had been told that someone must stay with it at all times if the Council did decide to loan it.

Two £30 fixed penalty notices had been issued to motorists who had parked causing an obstruction outside the Ridings Community Infant School.

The Council continued to have the use of the speed gun and volunteers were needed to operate it. Those interested were asked to get in touch with Councillor WI Humphrey.

PCSO Butler's November 2008 report was appended to the agenda for Members' information.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the PCSO's reports be noted; and
- (2) in the light of the new requirement that someone must stay with the SID at all times the offer to have it in the village in December be rescinded.

(b) Homewatch

Councillor WI Humphrey, in his capacity as Homewatch Coordinator, had provided a written report on low level crime and anti-social behaviour that had taken place over the last month in the village including vandalism to the Church Road bus shelter, theft from a vehicle, nuisance youth activity and fly posting.

RESOLVED:

That the Homewatch Co-ordinator's report be received.

(c) Saughall Neighbourhood Management Team

The Chairman reported that the Team had a meeting scheduled for 30 January 2009 to discuss where defibrillators could be located.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

270 YOUTH ISSUES

There was nothing new to report to the Council in respect of youth issues.

271 CO-OP STORE, CHURCH ROAD, SAUGHALL

There was no progress to report in respect of the problems local residents were facing in respect of the Co-op Stores (Minute No 249/2008 refers).

RESOLVED:

That the Council will continue to monitor the situation with a view to receiving a report at its next meeting on any progress made.

272 PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF WAIN HOUSE

Councillors B Kerr, Mrs JM Young, RA Storrar and WI Humphrey had attended a meeting with a representative of the Chester District Housing Trust and been informed of a new proposal being worked up. There was no funding in place in the respect of the proposal at the current time.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and the situation continue to be monitored.

273 THE NEW SCHOOL AND THE FUTURE OF THE THOMAS WEDGE CE  
(CONTROLLED) JUNIOR SCHOOL BUILDING

The Clerk reported that the 'Start of Site Ceremony' was scheduled for Wednesday, 17 December 2008 at 9:30am. The Chairman had been invited to attend but was unavailable to do so due to another commitment. It was noted that Councillor RA Storrar intended to attend this event if he could.

The Council received a letter dated 13 November 2008 from David Caldwell, Cheshire County Council's Project Development Manager that summed up the topics raised and consequential development within the proposals for the new school following the meeting held at the Vernon Institute on 28 April 2008. Also, Elaine Lee, Cheshire County Council's Planning and Development Officer, had emailed the Clerk at the request of County Councillor David Rowlands to provide an update on the scheme along with progress to date and the detail was noted.

RESOLVED:

That the reports be received.

275 HIGHWAY ISSUES

(a) Parked Cars on Pavements

It was noted that PCSO Mike Butler would continue to issue parking tickets to those who parked causing an obstruction.

(b) A5117 Major Roadworks

It was noted that the next Parish Council Liaison Meeting would be held on Tuesday, 9 December 2008. It had been agreed that steps would be taken to remedy, as far as possible, the problems associated with the right turning filter.

(c) Speeding Traffic and Use of the Speed Gun and Speed Indicator Device (SID)

Data collected from the last time the SID was used had been circulated with the agenda for Members information. PCSO Mike Butler had also dealt with this issue under his own report (Minute No 248(a)/2008 refers). The information provided was very useful and indicated a major problem was Seahill Road traffic entering the village from Sealand at speed.

RESOLVED:

That the SID data be made available to the Clerk to Sealand Community Council and to Flintshire County Council.

(d) Fly Posting

RESOLVED:

That the Council continue to monitor the situation regarding fly posting in the village at its monthly meetings.

(e) The Current “Bus War”

It was reported that the grass verge on Saughall Hey had been churned up by buses and that the bus terminus was experiencing similar problems.

RESOLVED:

That as care and consideration were needed by the bus companies the Clerk be requested to write to Arriva and First Bus about the damage their buses were causing in the hope that appropriate action would be taken to stop this from happening in future.

(f) Traffic Congestion – The Ridings Estate

It was noted that there did not seem to be a problem in this area of the village now.

RESOLVED:

That the Ridings Estate no longer be monitored in respect of traffic congestion.

(g) Repairs to Footpath near No 47 Rakeway, Saughall

Councillor Mrs P Humphrey reported that repairs had now been made to the footpath near to No 47 Rakeway.

(h) Hermitage Road – Hedges and Paths

It was reported that grass was encroaching on to the path on Hermitage Road between Aspen Grove and the Ridings Estate.

RESOLVED:

That Clerk be requested to inform Cheshire County Council’s Area Maintenance Manager, Mr Graham Anderton, and request he carry out a village highway inspection with Members as soon as possible.

(i) Sewage Problem at 100 Hermitage Road, Saughall

It was noted that the sewage problem at 100 Hermitage Road had still not been alleviated.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to ask Cheshire County Council’s Area Maintenance Manager, Mr Graham Anderton, to liaise with the Water Authority in an attempt to make progress on this unacceptable situation.

(j) Tree at 72 Darlington Crescent, Saughall

Members noted the contents of a letter from residents of Saughall regarding the roots of a very big Ash tree that had started to lift the path.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to write to Andy Keelan at Chester District Housing Trust to request that he takes the necessary action to remedy the situation with the footpath.

(k) Community Speed Check Area – Gateway Signage

Kay Parry, Technical Assistant at Cheshire County Council, reported that the Parish Council did not meet the criteria for Gateway Signage. It was noted that at least 92 Saughall residents had signed up to the ‘Setting the Pace’ initiative. The Council had regularly used the SID and the speed gun and were at a loss to know what more it could do to prove the point as provision of the signs was subject to the local community actively engaging in speed management initiatives for at least a 12 month period.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to contact Derek Bowker at Cheshire Action to request that he carries out some research into the criteria for installation of community speed watch signage before the next Gowry North Area Committee meeting as Councillor Mrs JE Storrar intends to bring the subject up for discussion there.

(l) Copper Beach, Church Road, Saughall

It was reported that the problem had been rectified.

(m) Park Avenue, Saughall – Parking Chaos

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to ask Councillor David Rowlands for a progress report concerning the problems emergency services are having accessing homes because of vehicles parking in Park Avenue.

(n) Bus Shelter on Church Road with the Junction of Saughall Hey, Saughall

The Clerk had written to Cheshire County Council’s Transport Co-ordination Section to ask if the shelter could be replaced with something less comfortable to discourage anti-social behaviour. Consequently, it had been agreed to remove the seats and this had now been done.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(o) 34 Meadows Lane, Saughall – Crab Apple Tree

It was noted that persons unknown had removed the Crab Apple Tree.

RESOLVED:

That PCSO Mike Butler be requested to make enquiries to try to find out who had removed the Crab Apple Tree.

(p) Bus Service to Chester Railway Station

Members noted the content of an email dated 20 November 2008 from Kay Parry concerning bus services to get from Saughall to Chester Railway Station.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to write to Andy Nickson of Cheshire County Council's Transport Co-ordination Section to ask if it would be possible for the City Link bus to go alternatively from the Railway Station to the Bus Exchange rather than Frodsham Street.

276 ACCOUNTS

(a) Completion of the Annual Audit for the year ended 31 March 2008

The External Auditor had completed the 2007/08 Audit and certified the annual return and her report had been circulated with the agenda. It would be necessary to consider her report and put any actions in hand.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) it be noted that the information contained in the annual return is in accordance with the Audit Commission's requirements and no matters have come to the External Auditor's attention giving her cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met; and
- (2) the Finance and General Purposes Committee be requested to consider the External Auditor's report at its next meeting scheduled for 7:30pm on Thursday, 26 February 2008 and make recommendations on any actions to be taken as a result to the Council.

(b) Payments made since the meeting of the Council held on 3 November 2008:

RESOLVED:

That the following payments be approved:

<u>Financial Year 2008/2009</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>Cheque No</u>
Mrs M Abrams (Honoraria for the six ladies who help in the library)	150.00	102193
Mr W Abrams (Honoraria for clock winding)	25.00	102194
Morrall Play Solutions (quarterly inspection of play equipment)	73.43	102195
Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council (Printing September/October 2008)	62.71	102196
Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council (Postage)	27.86	102197
Newbrook Engineering (Crewe) Ltd (fitting Cheshire Railings)	693.25	102198
Saughall Neighbourhood Management Team (Grant)	833.33	102199
Mrs S Hudspeth (Expenses)	58.27	102200
Mrs S Hudspeth (Salary)	622.69	102201
Oaktree Nurseries (Christmas Tree)	103.50	102202
Saughall Building Services Chester (installation of benches in the Golden Jubilee Park)	360.00	102203
Mr R Hipkiss (November 2008 Street Cleaning)	973.65	102204
City of Chester Training Band (Christmas Lights event)	70.00	102205
Paul Edwards Gardening and Landscaping	1,070.00	102206
Mr H Wilkinson (Refurbishment of bin)	135.00	102207

(c) Receipts

RESOLVED:

That the following receipt be noted:

	<u>£</u>
Interest on 14 Day Interest Account to 21 November 2008	19.90

(d) Cash to Bank Reconciliation and Golden Jubilee Park Development Fund Reconciliation

RESOLVED:

That the contents be noted.

(e) Saughall Friday Club

It was noted that the expected request for a financial contribution towards the cost of the Christmas dinner had not been received.

## 277 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION (LGR) IN CHESHIRE

### (a) Progress with LGR

Appointments were being made to the Heads of Service posts and some had been advertised externally. The consultation on the fourth and fifth tiers appointments had closed and a decision on how they would be filled was awaited. Expressions of interest were requested from staff in the constituent local authorities in respect of voluntary redundancies on 31 March 2009.

It was noted that the Shadow Authority was busy preparing its 2009/10 budget.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

### (b) Annual Grants Paid by Chester City Council to Parish Council in the Chester District

It was reported that it was expected that the Double Taxation Grant previously paid by Chester City Council would not be available after Vesting Day but that Council tax would be lower than at present.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

### (c) Consultations

- (i) Gambling Act 2005 – Statement of Principles
- (ii) Licensing Act 2003 – Statement of Licensing Policy

All Members had been sent a copy of both consultations documents. Both consultations ran until 16 January 2009

RESOLVED:

That Members be requested to consider both consultation documents with a view to putting forward their comments at the next meeting of the Council scheduled for 5 January 2009 so that formal responses can be formulated.

## 278 COMMUNITY EVENTS

Councillor Mrs J Johnson reported on the proceedings of the Christmas Lights Switch-On Ceremony on Thursday, 27 November 2008. There had been approximately 500 people in attendance. It had been well supported by the community and the £300 profit made would be donated to the Vernon Institute Management Committee for something specific for the Vernon Institute.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be received;
- (2) Councillor Mrs J Johnson be congratulated on her excellent organisation and hard work that had ensured that the event was a great success and be requested to lead on next year's event; and
- (3) details of this successful Christmas event be reported in the next Parish Council Newsletter and at the next Annual Assembly.

279 PARISH COUNCIL SURGERIES

- (a) Surgery held on 29 November 2008

Councillor A Warrington had presided over the last Parish Council Surgery. There had been praise for the Christmas Lights Switch-On Ceremony which had been well organised and problems reported in respect of the local buses.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

- (b) Surgery on Saturday, 3 January 2009

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Mrs JM Young be requested to preside over the next Parish Council Surgery between 10:00am and 10:45am on Saturday, 3 January 2009 on the forecourt of the Co-op Stores, Church Road, Saughall and bring a report on its proceedings to the next meeting of the Council.

280 ODD JOBS

There were no odd jobs to be done at the moment.

281 VERNON INSTITUTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (VIMC)

It was reported that the insulation had been a success and the Vernon Institute was retaining its heat. The Band Concert would be held this Sunday at 7:00pm. The £300 donation following the Christmas Lights Switch-On Ceremony would be used for something specific.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

282 ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

It was noted that the Gowy North Area Committee meeting would be held at 7:00pm on Thursday, 4 December 2008 at Christleton High School and again on Tuesday, 9 December 2008 at Queens Park High School.

283 COMMUNICATION RECEIVED

The Council considered an email dated 3 November 2008 from Neil Minnis, a resident of Saughall, and requested the Clerk to take action in respect of the locked gate through the estate onto the cycleway and include an item in the next Newsletter re. the proposed car-sharing scheme.

284 CIRCULARS

The following circulars had been received. Any one wishing to see a copy would contact the Clerk.

Cheshire County Council's Local Transport Plan Progress Report 2006-2008  
Highways and Transportation Local Joint Committee's agenda for the meeting that was held on Thursday, 20 November 2008  
Cheshire County Council's Winter Gritting Routes Leaflet 2008/09  
Cheshire Police Authority Have Your Say October 2008  
Cheshire County Council's Cheshire Matters – November 2008  
What's On in Chester and Cheshire – November 2008?  
Cheshire County Playing Fields Association – Annual Report 2007-08 and their Playing Field Newsletter Autumn 2008