

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH
COUNCIL held on 7 November 2011 at the Vernon Institute, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor DF Holman
Councillor Mrs J Johnson
Councillor B Kerr
Councillor Mrs J Knox
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar
Councillor RA Storrar
Councillor A Warrington
Councillor Mrs D Whitton
Councillor Mrs JM Young (in the Chair)
Councillor PP Young

CWAC Councillor B Crowe
PCSO Wendy Leason
PC Rhys Matthews

167. APOLOGIES FOR AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Apologies for authorised absence were received from:

Councillor Mrs K Ford
Councillor WI Humphrey, (Homewatch Chairman)
Councillor RK Shukla.

168. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

169. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 5 September 2011 be confirmed as a correct record.

170. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

(a) Planning held on 5 September and 3 October 2011

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 5 September and 3 October 2011 be received.

(b) General Purposes held on 3 October 2011

Councillor B Kerr referred to Minute No. 40 (c) Saughall Neighbourhood Management Team where it had been reported that the Team was seeking quotes for the replacement of broken concrete posts in Saughall Hey and

requested that the Team be invited to assist with the replacement of concrete posts in Greenway as well.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 3 October 2011 be received; and

(2) Saughall Neighbourhood Management Team be requested to obtain quotes to replace the broken concrete posts in Greenway.

(c) Finance and Business Development held on 10 October 2011

The Committee had recommended the Council to consider setting aside sums of money from its budget, to fund any future action it may decide to take to protect the local Green Belt and to assist the community event, Music in the Park on Monday, 4 June 2012 being held to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee (£2000). It had also made the decision to join the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE).

RESOLVED: That

(1) the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Business Development Committee held on 10 October 2011 be received;

(2) the Committee's recommendation to build up a contingency fund to support any future action it may wish to take to protect the local Green Belt be agreed;

(3) £2000 be set aside from the Council's contingencies budget head to help fund the planned community event detailed above, being arranged to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee; and

(4) the Committee's decision to join CPRE be endorsed.

171. REVIEW OF THE CONDUCT OF COUNCIL BUSINESS

The Council was requested to review the way it had been conducting its business since the beginning of the current Municipal Year. In doing so it considered Minute No. 87 of its meeting held on 21 April 2011 as follows and had regard to the Terms of Reference of its two new Committees, General Purposes and Finance and Business Development:

'Further to Minute No. 63/2011 of the last meeting held on 7 March 2011 the Council considered a written report by the Clerk that set out the following recommendations:

That:

(1) the work undertaken by the Modernising Practices and Procedures Working Party be noted;

- (2) the proposals set out in Paragraphs 3.0 to 3.5 of the report be agreed and the Clerk be requested to draft a meeting schedule from May 2011 to May 2012 incorporating them, for consideration at the Annual Meeting of the Council scheduled for Monday, 9 May 2011;
- (3) the Action Plan made up of Future Plans and Next Steps set out in Paragraphs 4.0 to 4.6 of the report be noted, revised as considered appropriate and endorsed;
- (4) the Clerk be requested to amend the Council's Standing Orders in the light of what has been agreed at (2) and (3) above;
- (5) the Clerk be requested to draft Terms of Reference for the two new Committees and present them to the Council for Approval in due course; and
- (6) the new arrangements agreed be kept under constant review and if they do not achieve the capacity the Council intends that they should, they be revised further until they do.**

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations set out above be agreed.'

It was reported that the new decision making process, implemented at the beginning of the year, had been put in place to try to make the Council more efficient and effective in the way it conducted its business.

Some Members, calling themselves traditionalists, raised concerns that the Council was no longer meeting on a monthly basis and that Members presiding over the Parish Surgery should be able to report back on its proceedings to the Council. Further, the current arrangements were having an adverse effect because it was making people, who had shown an interest in standing for election to the Parish Council, change their minds. However, other Members did not consider that the frequency of Council meetings had anything to do with people's aspirations to be a Parish Councillor. They believed that parishioners wanted to see a dynamic Parish Council that made informed decisions.

Members were disappointed that under the current system, they were only, able to receive a report from the Police at General Purposes Committee meetings that were held bi-monthly.

Reference was made to the recent proposal by Cheshire West and Chester Council to develop Oakwood Farm, land in the Green Belt, as a transit site for Gypsies and Travellers and it was suggested that the Council should have held a Special Meeting to discuss this matter, as parishioners perceptions were that the Parish Council had not been at the forefront of the campaign to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development. However, it was noted that this had been a unique situation and Members were of the view it should not colour their judgement. The Clerk reminded the Council that not only had it discussed the proposal for Oakwood Farm at its last meeting on 5

September 2011 (Minute Nos. 148 and 166 refer) but it had also been included on the agendas for the meetings of the Planning Committee (5 September and 3 October 2011), the General Purposes Committee meeting on 3 October 2011 (Minute No. 39 refers) and the Finance and Business Development Committee on 10 October 2011 (Minute No. 23 refers).

Councillor Mrs JM Young read out the content of a card received from Mr and Mrs P Brookes in respect of the decision of Cheshire West and Chester Council not to proceed with the development of Oakwood Farm as a transit site for Gypsies and Travellers because of the presence of a colony of rare bats in the vicinity and it was noted.

On the whole, the general consensus of opinion was that Members were happy with the new arrangements, although adjustments should be made regarding Police and Parish Council Surgery reporting arrangements. The Committees were functioning well with their delegated responsibilities and that the Council was demonstrating good governance.

It was considered that, as the new Committee structure had only been in operation since May 2011, it was too early to make any substantial changes. However, it was agreed that in future, the Council could receive a Police report and the General Purposes Committee could receive a report of the proceedings at the Parish Council Surgery. This meant that Members were able to receive a report every month on these matters either in Committee or at Council.

The Clerk reported that she was not available to attend the next scheduled meeting of the Finance and Business Development Committee on 15 December 2011.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Police reports and reports on the proceedings at Parish Council surgeries be reported on a monthly basis to the Council in the month it meets and to the General Purposes Committee in the month it does not meet;
- (2) all other current arrangements for conducting the Council's business remain in place and continue to be monitored and reviewed again in six months time, or sooner if it is deemed necessary;
- (3) the content of the card received from Mr and Mrs P Brookes be noted; and
- (4) the next meeting of the Finance and Business Development Committee be rescheduled to 7:00pm on Tuesday, 6 December 2011.

172. THE COUNCIL'S DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN

The Council reviewed its draft Business Plan which was an evolving document drawn up by the Finance and Business Development Committee. Following the recent consultation exercise undertaken on the Plan, Members noted the comments received from the Chairman of the Vernon Institute Management

Committee, Mr Chris Harman who considered that it was well put together and thought through and covered most of the issues and facilities of the village.

Councillor A Warrington proposed that a section be added to the Plan on Super Fast Broadband and of its potential for a more sustainable future for the village.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the proposal to include a section in the Business Plan about securing Super Fast Broadband for Saughall and Shotwick Park be agreed;
- (2) With the inclusion at (1) above the Business Plan be adopted as a living document;
- (3) the Business Plan be reviewed every six months or sooner if deemed necessary.

173. PROTECTION OF THE GREEN BELT

RESOLVED:

That Councillor B Crowe be requested to obtain a map of Saughall to help the Council identify and plot who local landowners are and the land they own.

174. MEMBERS' TRAINING

RESOLVED:

That training for all Members on Neighbourhood Planning be provided, once the Localism Bill is enacted and Government guidance is clearer.

175. CHAIRMAN'S BI-MONTHLY REPORT

Councillor Mrs JM Young informed as follows:

- HGV vehicles delivering to the Co-op Store were causing problems for local residents as they accessed the car park.
- she had attended the Student Village consultation meeting on 21 September 2011.
- she had attended the Chester and District Housing Trust's Meet and Greet Interviews for Wain Court.
- she had discussed All Saints C of E Primary School's Travel Plan with one of its parent governors.
- she had dealt with and reported a falling tree behind Wain Court.
- she had attended meetings in Chester and Winsford in connection with Cheshire West and Chester Council's proposal to erode the green belt with inappropriate development.
- she had supplied Saughall Pharmacy with Footpath Booklets to sell.
- a raw sewage problem at 100 Hermitage Road, had now been addressed.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

176. PARISH COUNCIL SURGERIES

(a) Surgery held on Saturday, 1 October 2011

Councillor Mrs D Whitton reported that on the whole, the people she had spoken to at her Surgery considered that the Council was doing a good job and had been happy about the way it had handled the Oakwood Farm proposal.

Concerns had been raised about not being able to pay English water rates in the Co-op Store but it had been accepted that the Council had done all that it could on that matter.

Councillor Mrs D Whitton reported that trees were affecting the drains in Greenway. Wain Court's lights were very bright. Dog fouling had become an issue outside the shop. Speeding traffic through the village had been raised as an issue again. The hedge from the Peg to the Ridings had not been cut back and had been reported to Cheshire West and Chester Council's Highway Officers.

Further to Minute No. 159 of the last Council meeting concerns had been expressed about the bus stop at Aspen Grove as the current arrangements for alighting were dangerous and it was reported that Cheshire West and Chester Council's Highway Officers had been informed that improvements were imperative.

There was also an issue over who should cut the hedge between the houses on Long Lane and the Golden Jubilee Park which was in the Council's ownership.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(b) Surgeries on Saturday, 3 December 2011 and 7 January 2012.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Andrew Warrington be requested to preside over the Surgery on 3 December 2011 at both the Co-op Store and the Farmers' Market between 10:00am and 10:45am, Councillor Mrs JM Young be requested to preside over the Surgery on 7 January 2012 to be held at both the Co-op Store and the Farmers' Market between 10:00am and 10:45am and Cheshire West and Chester Councillor Brian Crowe be invited to join them.

177. CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER (CWAC)
COUNCIL - LOCAL MEMBERS' REPORT

Councillor B Crowe reported that he had not got any further with Councillor B Kerr's request, at the last meeting (Minute No. 159 refers), that he make representations to ensure improvements were carried out (Minute No 148/2011 refers) where the bus stops by Aspen Grove on Hermitage Road, as current arrangements for alighting from the bus were dangerous. Councillor Crowe agreed to follow this up.

Councillor Crowe was informed that the CWAC Council owned trees in Greenway required pruning and that their roots were cracking the drains and required urgent attention.

It was reported that, following the recent gas works carried out in the Ridings, CWAC Council needed to do some tidying up work, patching of drive way entrances and grass verge repairs were needed.

Councillor Crowe was asked to find out what progress had been made in respect of gritting and the receptacles to keep the grit in. He was also asked if a receptacle, that could not be easily stolen, and some grit could be provided for the Vernon Institute.

RESOLVED:

That CWAC Councillor Crowe be requested to ask CWAC Council officers to take the necessary action to address the problems and carry out the requests detailed above.

178. VERNON INSTITUTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (VIMC)

Councillor P Young reported that the VIMC had held its Annual General Meeting on 11 October 2011 and some new officials had been appointed. The VIMC had been successful with its grant application and would be carrying out substantial repairs as a result.

The Christmas Lights Switch On event planned for the evening of 1 December 2011 would centre round the Vernon Institute. This would be a fund raising event with stalls in the main hall. On 4 December 2011 a brass band would perform in the main hall.

Plans to redevelop the site were under discussion and a meeting had been held with CWAC Council's Planning Officers. The new build could only be one storey high and a model of the proposal was being built to be used in a public consultation exercise. Funding sources were being explored to support this large development. A letter of support was requested from the Council but Councillor Young was uncertain about when it was required. A monetary contribution from the Council would also be sought at some stage in the future.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be received;
- (2) a letter of support to meet the VIMC's requirements will be provided by the Clerk, at the appropriate time; and
- (3) Councillor P Young be requested to clarify what the letter at (2) above needs to contain and inform the Clerk.

179. DELIVERY LORRIES USING THE CO-OP STORE'S CAR PARK

Councillor Mrs JM Young read out a letter dated 4 November 2011 from Wes Graham of 52 Church Road who was very concerned about the articulated lorries that delivered to the Co-op Store. They were big because they were used for multiple drops but were too big to directly access the car park and consequently, had to reverse into the exit. This involved mounting the footpath on the opposite side of the road and often running along it for a distance to complete reversing manoeuvres. This was having a detrimental effect on the kerbs, pathway and drains.

Resident's fences were often hit by these HGV vehicles and damage caused as a result. Lorries also entered the driveway opposite in order to swing round whilst reversing. This was an accident waiting to happen. Residents were worried about damage to their properties and about the safety of Co-op customers, coming and going at the same time as deliveries were being made, and about the safety of the pupils at the neighbouring All Saints C of E Primary School.

PC Rhys Matthews reported that he had been monitoring the situation but there was, currently, no legislation in place to prevent the Co-op receiving deliveries in this way by HGV vehicles. He hoped to work with the Co-op on this and reach a satisfactory conclusion but he understood it could use whatever vehicle it wanted to deliver to its stores.

The letter informed that Mr Graham had recently been contacted by the Co-op's health and safety team who, it would appear, proposed to look into this situation. Therefore, the Council was hopeful that appropriate action would be taken.

The Clerk had also received a General Report-a-Problem Form from Gill Whittaker which detailed the same concerns.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to write back to the two residents of Church Road informing them that the Council has noted the situation and is hopeful that the Co-op will try to address it but it will be continued to be monitored by Members and the Police.

180. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT ON THE REVOCATION OF THE NORTH WEST OF ENGLAND PLAN

Councillor Mrs K Ford had requested that the Council be made aware that the Department for Communities and Local Government was consulting on any aspect of the report and responses were invited by Friday, 20 January 2012, by including this Item on the agenda. The Non-technical summary had been made available for Members' information.

It was noted that the consultation was directed at Principal Authorities and that the Council did not have the resources to deal with it.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to ask Cheshire West and Chester Council if it intended to submit a response to the Department for Communities and Local Government's consultation.

181. ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

(a) The Council noted the following outside body meetings coming up and agree representation where required:

- Action Annual General Meeting 2011 at 6.30pm for a 7.00pm start on Wednesday, 23 November 2011 at Philip Leverhulme Centre, Reaseheath College, Nantwich, CW5 6DF
Light refreshments will be provided on arrival.
Members were unable to attend.
- Cheshire West and Chester Council's Quality Parish Council Forum on Wednesday, 23 November 2011.
Councillors WI Humphrey and B Kerr agreed to attend.
- Bell Developments Consultation Day on Tuesday, 8 November 2011 at the Dee Point Centre, Blacon to which key stakeholders and local groups are invited. The time slots being attended were as follows:

9:30am – 10:45am – Councillors A Warrington, Mrs JM Young and P Young agreed to attend in this slot.
12:30pm - 1:45pm – Councillor Mrs D Whitton agreed to attend in this slot.
- Public Meeting to consider the Proposal for a North Wales Waste Treatment Plant at 6:00pm on Tuesday, 22 November 2011 at the Civic Hall, Connah's Quay.

Councillors Mrs JM Young and Brian Crowe agreed to attend.

(b) The Council received reports from Members on proceedings at outside meetings attended as follows:

- Cheshire Association Of Local Council's Annual Meeting 2011 – Middlewich Town Hall On Thursday, 20 October 2011 – 6:30 – 9pm
Councillors WI Humphrey, A Warrington and Mrs JM Young were in attendance and the Clerk had submitted the following Notice of Motion:

'This Council calls on the Cheshire Association of Local Councils to support all Parish Councils in Cheshire in the protection of the Green Belt.'

Councillor WI Humphrey had submitted a written report on this event which Councillor Mrs JM Young read out. Councillor Humphrey thanked the Clerk for the wording of the Motion and the background information supplied and Councillors B Kerr, A Warrington and Mrs JM Young for their support.

The Motion had been carried unanimously at the Annual Meeting.

Members reported that it had been a good meeting where the withdrawal of street cleansing grant had also been discussed.

- Cheshire Association of Local Councils' Chester Area Meeting on Wednesday, 21 September 2011 – 7:30pm at HQ, Chester
Councillor Mrs JM Young to attend.

Councillor WI Humphrey had also submitted a written report about the meeting which Councillor Mrs JM Young read out. Councillor Humphrey informed that he had attended part of the meeting. He proposed that the Council should take the initiative to determine the outcome of the parcel of land bordered by Church Road/Parkway and Fieldway.

The Council discussed neighbourhood planning and the process involved.

- Interviews at Wain House on Monday 31 October and Friday, 4 November 2011.
Councillors WI Humphrey, A Warrington and Mrs JM Young had attended. There were still a number of vacancies but Chester District Housing Trust intended to hold a coffee morning once all the tenants had moved in.

182. COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED

To following communications had been received:

- Letter dated 21 September 2011 from Cheshire West and Chester Council's Head of Marketing and Communications offering advice on Christmas lights and decoration installation.

Noted.

- Copy of a letter dated 7 September 2011 from the Chairman of the Governors of Saughall All Saints Primary School to the Leader and Chief Executive of Cheshire West and Chester Council regarding the proposed use of Oakwood farm.

Noted.

- Letter dated 19 October 2011 from the Chairman of the Cheshire Police Authority and the Chief Constable regarding the joint funding of PCSOs.

The Clerk would write back confirming the Council's intention to continue funding the PCSO post during 2012/13 at a total cost of £11,800.

183. CIRCULARS

The following circulars had been received and were available at the meeting for Members' information:

- Talks at the Grosvenor Museum.
- Cheshire West and Chester Council's Exhibitions and Events.
- Cheshire Rural Touring Arts Autumn Season 2011.
- CPRE's How to respond to planning applications: An 8-step guide.
- The Playing Field – Autumn 2011.