

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held on 6 June 2011 at the Vernon Institute, Church Road, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor WI Humphrey (Homewatch Chairman)  
Councillor Mrs J Johnson  
Councillor A Warrington  
Councillor Mrs JM Young (in the Chair)

Also in attendance: Councillor Mrs J Knox  
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar  
PCSO Wendy Leason

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Mrs JM Young be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing Municipal Year.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED:

That Councillor A Warrington be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing Municipal Year.

3. CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

4. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

RESOLVED:

That the Membership of the Committee be noted as follows:

Councillors WI Humphrey, Mrs J Johnson, A Warrington and Mrs JM Young.

5. POLICE/HOMEWATCH

(a) Police

PCSO Wendy Leason presented the Police Report outlining crimes committed and anti-social behaviour in the village since her last report to the Council meeting on 21 April 2011.

There had been three incidents of anti-social activity, two of which had been at the Youth Club. There had been no incidents in April or May that had been alcohol related. There had been a burglary on Parkgate Road and a computer had been stolen. There had also been a burglary at Oaktree Nurseries where a caravan had been broken into with the intention of stealing the safe.

Tools had been stolen from a vehicle parked on Sea Hill Road. There had been two break-ins, two bikes had been stolen from a shed in Foxlea and a chain saw and fishing tackle had been taken from a garage at Chestnut House.

The Police had carried out some speed enforcement on Long Lane and Hermitage Road and the Speed Indicator Device (SID) had also been used on Church Road. The PCSO also reported on under age drinking and on a test purchase at the Egerton Arms Pub.

The PCSO was asked to find out the results of the Hoole tests in respect of the 'Twenty's Plenty' campaign. The Parish Council wanted to apply for a Twenty miles an hour speed limit for the whole of Saughall when these results were known.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) PCSO Leason be thanked for her informative report;
- (2) PCSO Leason be requested to ascertain the results of the Hoole tests in respect of the 'Twenty's Plenty' campaign; and
- (3) the Council be recommended to consider making an application for a twenty miles an hour speed limit for the whole of Saughall, once the results of the Hoole tests are known.

(b) Homewatch

Councillor WI Humphrey, in his capacity as Homewatch Chairman, presented an oral report detailing low level crime and anti-social activity that had taken place over the last few weeks in the village. This included:

- Two burglaries
- Vehicles still being parked at the bus stop at the Peg
- Speedwatch and the recent SID activity
- Youth nuisance at the former Ridings School
- Smashed glass at the Service Station (To be removed by Cheshire West and Chester Council's Streetscene Officers)

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Humphrey be thanked for his informative presentation.

(c) Saughall Neighbourhood Management Committee

Councillor Mrs JM Young reported that the Neighbourhood Management Team was also very interested in the 'Twenty's Plenty' campaign.

The Neighbourhood Management Team was looking for volunteers to assist with their Summer Play Scheme and requested that PCSO Wendy Leason confirm her availability to assist with this on both Wednesday afternoons when it was running in July.

RESOLVED:

That the Neighbourhood Management Team's report be received.

6. DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee considered its draft Terms of Reference drawn up by the Clerk.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Committee's Terms of Reference be **recommended** to the Council for adoption; and
- (2) the following **recommendations** be also made to the Council:
  - (a) a Police/Homewatch Report be also provided at ordinary Council meetings;
  - (b) Councillor B Kerr be requested to sit on the Committee to provide input in respect of Highways/Transport Issues and Litter Picking; and
  - (c) discussions be held with the Litter Picking Contractor in the hope that the removal of broken glass in the Golden Jubilee Park can be added to the Contract.
- (3) Seddons be requested to tidy up the yard at the former Ridings Community Infant School.

7. (a) Surgery held on 4 June 2011

Councillor K Ford had presided over the Parish Council Surgery held at the Farmers' Market in the Vernon Institute on 4 June 2011. Cheshire West and Chester Councillor B Crowe had also been in attendance. They were not in attendance at this meeting but had sent a written report. Issues discussed had included:

- The need for more dog bins (along Church Road and on Sea Hill Road near the telephone box).
- The vacant seat on the Council and a possible co-option to fill it.
- The broken glass on the pavement opposite the Service Station.
- The state of the grass verges in the Ridings Estate.
- Concern about the possibility of Saughall and Blacon being joined up by new development.
- The new tenants at the Greyhound Inn were hoping to buy locally grown produce to serve to their customers.
- Suspected drug misuse.

RESOLVED:

That Councillors Ford and Crowe be thanked for their informative report.

(b) Surgery to be held on Saturday, 2 July 2011

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Mrs JM Young be requested to preside over the next Parish Council Surgery scheduled for Saturday, 2 July 2011 to be held at the Farmers' Market in the Vernon Institute between 10:00am and 10:45am.

8. CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER (CWAC) COUNCIL'S HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT REVIEW

This consultation on proposed changes to Home to School Transport ran from Monday, 16 May to Sunday, 3 July 2011. Comments were requested on the following two areas where the changes were proposed:

(a) To withdraw subsidised denominational transport for pupils, with effect from September 2012; and

(b) To withdraw subsidised post-16 transport for pupils, with effect from September 2012.

Full details had been provided and all Members on email have been sent the link.

Councillor Mrs JM Young informed that she had been to a consultation meeting in Ellesmere Port on the proposed changes to Cheshire West and Chester Council's Home to School Transport Policy and had been the only one objecting to the proposals.

There were concerns as the Government's proposals were that from 2014 children would have to stay in full time education until they were 18 years old.

RESOLVED:

That an item be included in the next Parish Newsletter, to alert parishioners to the ongoing Home to School Transport consultation, so that they can take part and make their feelings known to Cheshire West and Chester Council.

9. GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK

(a) Field Committee

The Field Committee had met on Sunday, 8 May 2011 and had identified and discussed the following issues:

- The perimeter path gave cause for concern as there were numerous holes in it.
- The pond was full of rubbish and the green algae were particularly bad.
- There was a lot of broken glass in the Park and the Field Committee proposed that its removal be included in the Council's Litter Picking Contract.
- The Committee queried who was responsible for the roadside verge outside the Park.

- Arrangements had been made to obtain advice on how to improve the drainage in the car park from Mr P Nightingale.
- Waverton Junior Football wanted to play football in the Park on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report of the Field Committee be received; and
- (2) the Council be **recommended** to consider adding the disposal of broken glass in the Golden Jubilee Park to its Litter Picking Contract.

(b) Car Park Drainage

The Committee considered an inspection report, the names of contractors who could carry out the work proposed and enclosures from Mr P Nightingale (Minute No. 9 (a) above refers). The report informed that the turf reinforcement mesh whilst offering a degree of protection by helping to prevent rutting and surface disturbance by wheeled vehicles, did not affect the normal drainage properties of the subsoil.

It appeared from Mr Nightingale's initial inspection that an area adjacent to the bitmac access road to the Uniform Groups' Headquarters had been more adversely affected by traffic movements than the remainder of the car park area. The worst of the flooding occurred here and was the lowest part of the car park.

The adjacent access road had been constructed at a higher level than the surrounding land and effectively interrupted the natural fall; however, had the access road not been there the raised embankment at the Fiddlers Lane boundary would have had a similar effect.

Mr Nightingale concluded that rainwater falling onto grassland would disperse by a combination of infiltration, evaporation and overland flow. The continual use of natural grass land for car parking would have a tendency to compact the top subsoil layers; this in turn would have an adverse effect on the infiltration properties of the soil. In addition, it was likely that the subsoil would be mainly clay in nature and this would also reduce infiltration rates.

The reduction in infiltration properties resulted in a greater reliance on overland flow to disperse surface water. In the case of the car park, this excess runoff collected at the lowest point resulting in a flooded area where traffic movements would only exacerbate the situation.

There were a number of alternatives for addressing the flooding issues, all of which would have cost implications. Mr Nightingale had assumed in each case that it was desirable to maintain the grassed appearance of the car park. The Options were as follows:

**Option 1** – Provide a completely new car park surface using a cellular reinforcing geocomposite grid lay on a suitable free draining sub-base with a geotextile membrane between the sub-base and sub-soil layers. Clearly this option would have very significant cost implications.

**Option 2** – Lay a land drain within a stone filled trench at the lowest point on the car park area and run the drain parallel to the access road and into a soak away which could be located in the corner of the field or just inside the children’s play area. In order to determine the size and design of the soak away required it would be necessary to undertake a permeability test in accordance with BRE Digest. Again this option would have cost implications but these would significantly less than option 1.

**Option 3** – If feasible, fence off this low lying area of the car park and prevent any vehicle movements within it. The area could be re-cultivated to break up the compacted surface and encourage infiltration of surface water and could be generally lowered further to act as a drainage swale to hold runoff from the remaining higher car park areas. This is likely to be the least expensive option but would result in the loss of car parking spaces.

RESOLVED:

That appropriate drainage work quotations be obtained for consideration at the next meeting.

(c) Annual Play Equipment Inspection Report

The Committee considered the Annual Play Inspection Report and noted that there were no serious concerns raised. In respect of the Aerial Runway that had only been provided three years ago, the report informed that

“The support legs lie within the free/fall space – the stopper on the cable needs to be moved away from the support legs on the cable – a minimum of 3.0m from the end of the cable will suffice.”

RESOLVED:

That the Play Equipment Inspector, Mr Alan Dymond be requested to explain in more detail exactly what is wrong with the Aerial Runway’s support legs.

(d) Path by the Uniform Groups’ Headquarters

RESOLVED:

That quotations for work necessary to the path along side the Uniform Groups’ Headquarters be placed on the agenda for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee.

(e) Football in the Park

The Council had been approached by football teams from Waverton and the Egerton Arms Public House who both wanted to use the facilities within the Golden Jubilee Park.

RESOLVED:

That representatives from each of the above football teams be requested to attend the next meeting of the Committee to address it on their proposals to use the football pitches and their maintenance.

10. AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROPOSALS FOR LAND AT LODGE LANE

It was reported that there would be a meeting of the Affordable Housing (Lodge Lane) Working Group at 10:30am on Tuesday, 14 June in the Uniform Groups' Headquarters to consider the design aspects of the scheme.

11. THE REDEVELOPMENT OF WAIN HOUSE

It was reported that it was expected that the new development, Wain Court, would be handed over at the end of June 2011.

12. HIGHWAY ISSUES

(a) Parked Cars on Pavements

Cars continued to park on pavements causing an obstruction.

(b) Bus Shelter on Parkgate Road – Roof Repairs

Quotes would be obtained.

(c) Kingswood Lane – Proposed Traffic Prevention Order

It was not possible to report any progress on the proposed Tree Preservation Order to the Committee. It would continue to be an agenda item.

(d) Location of Grit Bins

It was reported that Cheshire West and Chester Councillor B Crowe was dealing with this matter.

(e) Work on Hermitage Road

It was expected that some work would be undertaken on Hermitage Road shortly as a number of markings had appeared on its surface.

13. YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Councillor WI Humphrey reported on a proposal for the Youth Club to have the use of the patio area in the evening to socialise and for Barbecues etc.

14. LITTER PICKING

The Committee was concerned about the current state of the village and would discuss the matter with Councillor B Kerr so that he could liaise with the Council's Litter Contractor, Mr R Hipkiss if necessary.

15. LOCATION OF DOG FOULING BINS

It was reported that Karl Siteine of Cheshire West and Chester Council had met with Councillors WI Humphrey and A Warrington on 13 May 2011 regarding the location of dog bins. Mr Siteine had informed that any bins could be used to dispose of dog mess.

Following the meeting Mr Siteine confirmed his proposals as follows:

- Organise stickers to be made to identify the multi use of the bin
- Have the bin outside the newly renovated pub replaced
- Replace the bin outside the Vernon Institute
- Remove the bin from inside the bus stop
- Install a dog bin on the public footpath leading to the fields

Before putting the dog bin in, Mr Siteine would get in touch with Cheshire West and Chester Council's operations supervisor and ask him if it was a suitable place for the dog bin, from a cleansing stand point.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

#### 16. CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER COUNCIL'S STANDARDS COMMITTEE – PARISH REPRESENTATIVE

The Committee gave consideration to the Parish Council Voting Form and considered the choices available. It was asked to make three choices.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Pat Lott of Upton by Chester be first choice, Roger Parkin of Mickle Trafford and District be second choice and no third choice be made; and
- (2) the Clerk be requested to convey these choices to the Cheshire Association of Local Councils by 30 June 2011 as requested.

#### 17. FUTURE PRIORITIES

The Committee noted and endorsed its current priorities as follows:

- **A Sports Pavilion in the Golden Jubilee Park**

As this will be a very large capital project for the Council to undertake it may determine that the new building will reflect a modern, forward thinking community, and that it will be as 'green' as possible within an agreed budget, to benefit the environment and reduce future running costs. The new building could be open to all users of the Golden Jubilee Park and regarded as a community facility.

The Council must formulate external funding applications to help meet the costs of any new build, and is fortunate to have the support of Saughall Cricket Club, which may also attract grant aid to contribute to the building costs. The aim may be, subject to external funding being available, to have a new sports pavilion in use by 2016.

- **A New Parish Plan**

Before work can begin to replace the Council's existing Parish Plan which was drawn up with the assistance of the Cheshire Community Council and part financed with a match funded grant for £2,500 from the Countryside Agency's 'Vital Villages Programme' and published in 2004, it would be wise to see what



the enacted Localism Bill says in respect of Neighbourhood/Community and Parish Plans before work begins.

Survey work must be carried out as well as consultative meetings held before the new Plan is drafted and launched.

- **Community Events**

The Council is keen to support and help facilitate events such as:

- The Queen's Diamond Jubilee – Referred from Council meeting on 9 May 2011. (Minute No. 123/2011 refers)
- Remembrance Sundays
- Village Sports Days
- Christmas Lights Switch on.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Committee's current priorities be noted as set out above;
- (2) Paul Parry of Cheshire West and Chester Council be requested to attend a site visit to advise on any highway issues associated with the proposal to provide a Sports Pavilion in the Golden Jubilee Park;
- (3) the Vernon Institute Management Committee be requested to discuss the proposal to facilitate an event to be held to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in the hope that all the Groups in the village will come together to help organise and enjoy it;
- (4) Remembrance Sunday be held along similar lines to last year, on the afternoon of Sunday, 13 November 2011; and
- (5) the Council (via the Finance and Business Committee) consider whether it wishes to take a stall in the Golden Jubilee Park on Village Sports Day – Saturday, 16 July 2011.