

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held on 7 February 2012 at the Vernon Institute, Church Road, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor WI Humphrey (Homewatch Chairman)  
Councillor B Kerr  
Councillor Mrs J Knox  
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar  
Councillor A Warrington  
Councillor Mrs JM Young (in the Chair)

Cheshire West and Chester Councillor B Crowe

1. APOLOGIES FOR AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Apologies for authorised absence were received from Councillors Mrs J Johnson and Mrs D Whitton and PC Rhys Matthews and PCSO Wendy Leason (Rest Day) who were unable to attend.

2. CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

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

4. PARISH PLAN – RENEW AND REFRESH

The Council had agreed to start the process to renew and refresh the Parish Plan and had allocated £2,500 in its 2012/13 Budget for this purpose.

The Committee received a presentation from Claire Jones, Community Led Planning Officer, Cheshire Community Action on the Parish Plan renewal process. Members noted that the idea was not to write a new plan but to produce an updated action list. The first step was to arrange a show case event to gather ideas for a revised plan. (A cheese and wine evening would be appropriate.) Leaflets seeking views could also be distributed to all homes in the village.

Consultation could be carried out by various means. A new questionnaire could be drawn up, or key issues could be identified and consulted upon, or a whole scale consultation exercise, like the one which was carried out before the original Parish Plan was completed, could be carried out again.

On average, the Parish Planning review process tended to cost approximately £3,000 and it was noted that Cheshire West and Chester Council had not made any grants available to assist this process.

The Council was reminded that as with the Parish Plan, its renewal process must be community led.

Following her presentation Ms Jones answered Members' questions as appropriate.

RESOLVED:

That Ms Jones be thanked for attendance at the meeting and for her informative presentation.

5. PARISH COUNCIL'S SURGERY

Councillor K Ford had sent a written report on the proceedings of the Parish Surgery over which she had presided on 4 February 2012. The report was read out as follows:

"A Light by Mill Farm, Parkgate Road is out, the lights were updated a week or so ago. (Please can you request Highways to come out and fix the problem?)

A Parishioner stated "The village is a mess with lots of litter"

A Parishioner had asked "when will the potholes be filled in at the entrance to Parkway, as they are getting very large?" (Please could you make highways aware of the concern and I will respond to Parishioner.)

The public footpath at the top of the village (Long Lane) opposite K's Nursery is becoming very overgrown and needs cutting back. (Please could you request this is looked into?)

Several Parishioners are happy with everything in the village and could not think of anything that would concern them."

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and Cheshire West and Chester Council be requested to take steps to rectify the highway problems outlined therein.

6. POLICE/HOMEWATCH

(a) Police

PCSO Wendy Leason had submitted a written report setting out details of crimes and anti-social behaviour which had occurred in the village since the last Council meeting as follows:

**"Anti-Social behaviour:**

I am very pleased to report that there have been no incidents of Anti Social Behaviour reported during the month of January. What is very surprising is that we have had three incidents reported over the last weekend (probably the coldest this winter), two litter bins on Church Road were on fire and the other incident involved local lads, allegedly, giving a member of staff at the Co-op problems.

### **Other Incidents:**

A small amount of lead was taken from the Church roof. The vicarage has had the front window damaged, possibly an attempt to gain entry.

### **Dog Fouling:**

It has been brought to my attention that there is a real issue with Dog owners not picking up after their dogs. On my travels around the village, I have seen for myself, a large amount of fouling on the pavements. I have made the Community Wardens aware of the locations that are affected and they have been out to the areas. Three of the roads most affected have been cleaned by Street Scene.

I have hand delivered 200+ leaflets to properties on Church Road, Saughall Hey, Greenway, Rakeway and The Ridings. Another 200 leaflets have been left with the school which have been distributed to the pupils to take home.

RESOLVED:

That PCSO Leason be thanked for her report.

### **(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:

- Suspicious behaviours between 3 – 4am reported by a resident of Church Road.
- Overnight theft of a generator from a resident of Meadows Lane.
- Locking post installed adjacent to the Uniformed Groups' Headquarters appeared to be damaged (in the locked position on the ground), consequently providing easy access to the Golden Jubilee Park.
- Vehicle P34 BEL parked in bus lane at the Peg causing an obstruction.
- The scaffolding at the Church was being regularly checked. There were no problems to report since the theft of lead.
- It had been a very quiet month Homewatch wise but villagers must remain vigilant at all times and report anything suspicious, however small.

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 were making arrangements with the Police and the Housing Trust to provide five activities for children during the Summer Holidays.

Councillor Mrs JM Young also reported that there was to be a further meeting to plan the 'Picnic in the Park' event that would be held on Monday, 4 June 2012 to

celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Any Councillor willing to help with this event should attend, if possible.

RESOLVED:

That the Neighbourhood Management Team's report be received.

## 7. HIGHWAY ISSUES

### (a) Parked Cars on Pavements

This was still a problem and was being monitored by Members and the PCSO was taking necessary action when vehicles were found to be causing an obstruction.

### (b) Speeding Traffic and the Proposal for Saughall to be designated a Community Speed Watch Area

There was no progress to report on this initiative.

### (c) Bus Stop opposite Aspen Grove and at the Egerton Arms on Hermitage Road

Upgrading work was to be undertaken by Cheshire West and Chester Council but it was not known when the work would be done.

### (d) Kingswood Lane – Proposed Traffic Prevention Order

There was still no progress to report on this initiative. Councillor B Crowe agreed to chase progress and report back to the next meeting.

### (e) Twenty's Plenty

Councillor B Crowe informed that further discussion would be had at Cheshire West and Chester Council before this initiative was introduced.

### (f) Obstructions causing danger to persons in Church Way

This problem had been referred to Cheshire West and Chester Council.

RESOLVED:

Councillor B Crowe agreed to chase progress and report back to the next meeting.

### (g) Crofters Way – Moss

There was moss on the pavement as it was always in the shade. This had been reported to CWAC Council's Streetscene Team and referred to Saughall Neighbourhood Management Team.

(h) 7 Saughall Hey

It had been brought to the Council's attention by Mr Milward, who resided at 7 Saughall Hey that stop cocks had been covered up when works had been carried out by contractors on behalf of the National Grid. This meant that the water could not be turned off. This matter must be referred to Cheshire West and Chester Highways Department.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to log this problem with the Area Highways Manager, Kieran Collins.

8. GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK

(a) Report of the Field Committee

The Field Committee would next meet at 4pm on Thursday, 23 February 2012 and the Tree Warden would be in attendance.

(b) Spring Tidy Up

The date for the Spring tidy would be discussed with the Saughall Management Team when it met on 29 February 2012. The Team would be asked to take the lead on this initiative.

(c) Ponds

The Committee was aware that there was a lot of rubbish in the ponds. This would be removed as part of the Spring tidy up.

(d) Perimeter Path

External funding options would need to be explored before work required on the perimeter path could be commissioned as it was likely to be costly.

(e) Aerial Runway

The Aerial Runway had now been fixed and was working satisfactorily

(f) Moles

There was currently no mole activity in the park but the situation would continue to be monitored, as it was likely they were in hibernation.

(g) Path by the Uniformed Groups' Headquarters

Quotes had been received to put down concrete and tarmac. They now needed to be considered along with others and works required prioritised.

(h) Removal of the Steel Structure

Mr Brian Huxley had agreed to remove the steel structure from the Park but it had not been done yet.

(i) Saughall Rotary Club Request

Mrs H Thorniley – Jones had written to the Clerk, on behalf of the Rotary Club, requesting the use of the Golden Jubilee Park on Saturday, 14 July 2012 for the purpose of holding the “Saughall Olympics”.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to inform Mrs Thorniley Jones that

(1) the Rotary Club has the Council’s permission to hold the “Saughall Olympics” in the Park but it must not charge an entry fee, as entry to the Park; and the use of its facilities are free; and

(2) the Rotary Club must consult Mr Philip Brookes over the use of the Uniformed Groups’ Headquarters.

9. AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROPOSALS FOR LAND AT LODGE LANE

It was reported that the Chester and District Housing Trust’s planning application for 18 two and three bed houses has been granted, a new licence application has been made and it was hoped that the work could commence in the Summer.

A letter dated 26 January 2012 had been received from Arley Homes requesting a meeting with the Council to discuss the Affordable Homes Initiative for Local and Rural Communities in the Saughall and Shotwick Park area.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the report on the Chester and District Housing Trust’s activities be noted; and

(2) the Clerk be requested to respond to Arley Homes’ letter thanking it for its interest but informing that the Council is already involved with an Affordable Homes project.

10. THE REDEVELOPMENT OF WAIN HOUSE

It was reported that the Official Opening of Wain Court had been a very good event.

A Residents Association was now being set up.

Saughall Neighbourhood Management Team would be making contact re a Sloppy Slipper event with a proposal that it be held at Wain Court.

RESOLVED:

That the reports be received.

## 11. TAXI LICENSING CONSULTATION

The Clerk had received a letter dated 16 January 2012 from Lois Hughes, Research Officer, Research and Intelligence, Cheshire West and Chester Council that informed that residents were being asked for their views on proposed taxi licensing changes to improve the service for passengers and drivers alike.

Cheshire West and Chester Council had inherited different policies from the previous local authority areas of Chester, Ellesmere Port and Neston and Vale Royal. This meant taxis, otherwise known as Hackney carriages, adhered to differing rules in each area for fares, licence restrictions and vehicle type and colour.

The Council was looking to standardise regulation so that passengers, drivers and operators throughout the borough benefited from clear and consistent standards. A three-month consultation period would end on Monday 16 March 2012.

Copies of the questionnaire were available in public buildings and community venues throughout the borough, backed by a poster and press advertising campaign.

The Clerk informed that she had included this information in the February 2012 Parish Newsletter.

RESOLVED:

That the detail of the consultation be noted.

## 12. LITTER PICKING AND WASTE BINS

It was reported that the litter bin by the bus stop by the Vernon Institute on Church Road had been replaced by Cheshire West and Chester Council.

Councillor Brian Crowe was requested to find out what Cheshire West and Chester Council's policy was regarding additional bags of rubbish left beside litter bins. Were they collect when the litter bins were emptied or not?

## 13. YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Councillor WI Humphrey reported that there had been damage caused to a toilet seat in the Ladies toilets at the Youth Club.

The Youth Club was attracting large numbers each week.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

## 14. FUTURE PRIORITIES

The Committee was requested to:

- (a) keep the Council's future priorities that fell within its remit, as listed below, under review;
- (b) identify any new priorities; and
- (c) take any action considered appropriate.

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

As this would 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.

This initiative was also included in the Parish Council's Business Plan. Some Members had visited Neston Cricket Club at Parkgate and were very impressed with the facilities provided there.

The deeds for the Council's land on Fiddlers Lane must be checked.

A question would be included on the questionnaire that would be distributed to all homes in the village as part of the Parish Plan Renew process, to ascertain if parishioners would like a Sports Pavilion/Community Facility in Saughall. If the findings of the survey was that they do, plans would be drawn.

### **A New Parish Plan**

The Council has agreed that work can now 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.

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

The Annual Assembly on 30 April 2012 will be the vehicle used to launch the Parish Plan Renewal initiative.

### **Neighbourhood Planning**

The Council has agreed to monitor the work and costs involved as other local councils draw up their Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Planning be revisited when Members consider it appropriate to do so.



**Woodlands Trust – Free Trees**

The Tree Warden would choose the trees and where to plant them in the village. She has not done this yet.

**Protection of the Green Belt**

The Committee has agreed to identify Saughall land owners and plot this on a map. Cheshire West and Chester Councillor Brian Crowe has provided the map. This work should now begin.

**Community Events**

The Council is supporting and helping facilitate events such as:

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee – Monday, 4 June 2012.

The Council has put £2,000 aside to help fund this event in a designated fund. A Co-ordination Committee of parishioners is moving this initiative forward and planning the event. Members have been invited to attend its meetings and help.

A risk assessment must be carried out and appropriate public liability insurance must be in place.

Remembrance Sundays (Second Sunday in November) - 11 November 2012

The 2011 event had been well organised and an improvement on the previous year.

Roll of Honour

Provision had been made for this in the Council's 2012/13 Budget.

Village Sports Days

"Saughall Olympics" Saturday, 14 July 2012. Saughall Rotary was organising this event which would be held in the Golden Jubilee Park.

Christmas Lights Switch on Ceremony - 1 December 2011 was a successful event and the police did a fantastic job. A similar event would be arranged for December 2012.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee's current list of Future Projects/Ideas along with the Actions agreed and progress being made as set out above be noted and further reviewed at the next meeting.