

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH COUNCIL held on Monday, 17 February 2016 at the Uniformed Groups' Headquarters, Fiddlers Lane, Saughall.

PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Council was addressed by:

Mr Brian Huxley who informed that he, as Chairman, and other members of the Saughall Community and Sports Pavilion Committee (SCASP) had worked long and hard towards their aim of attracting enough external funding to build a Community and Sports Pavilion in the Golden Jubilee Park. He was disappointed that the project could not be delivered and hoped that perhaps it could be resurrected in four/five years' time. Mr Huxley made the point that local people were behind the project and had given it their unanimous backing. Mr Huxley also informed that there were plans and blue prints in place and he urged the Council to commit to the project.

Councillor Mrs K Ford informed that she and the Council did recognise the work that the SCASP Committee had carried out. On behalf of the Council she thanked all concerned and expressed appreciation for the time and commitment the Committee had put into the project.

In attendance:

Councillor A Bailey
Councillor Ms M Collins
Councillor Mrs K Ford
Councillor H Jennings
Councillor Mrs J Knox
Councillor Mrs J O'Malley
Councillor Ms A Manning
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar
Councillor A Warrington
Councillor Mrs JM Young
Councillor PP Young

Councillor Brian Crowe
Mr Brian Huxley, Chairman of Saughall Cricket Club
Mr Tony Summers, Chairman of the Saughall Uniformed Groups

60. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillor Mrs D Whitton.

61. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor A Bailey declared a personal interest in the SCASP project by virtue of being the Treasurer of the SCASP Committee.

Councillor Mrs JE Storrar declared a personal interest in the SCASP project by virtue of being a member of the SCASP Committee.

Councillor Mrs JM Young declared a personal interest in the SCASP project by virtue of her being a member of the SCASP Committee and her interest in Saughall Uniformed Groups.

62. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

RESOLVED:

That the Council's Standing Orders be suspended for the following items of business so that Messrs Brian Huxley and Tony Summers, who have been invited to attend this meeting, can make a contribution and answer any questions.

63. GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK

(a) Saughall Community and Sports Pavilion Project

The Council considered the notes taken by the Clerk at a meeting between representatives of the Council, the SCASP Committee and the Uniformed Groups held on 21 January 2016. At that meeting it was realised, with regret, that despite best efforts the project's funding shortfall could not be overcome.

The Clerk had written to the Chief Executive Officer at the Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC), Jackie Weaver for advice on the use and management of the Golden Jubilee Park which was in the ownership of the Council. She had set the scene, provided a copy of the notes from the meeting held on 21 January 2016, a copy of the Joint Use Agreement currently in place and information on the consultation that had been carried out on the proposal to erect a Community and Sports Pavilion.

Mrs Weaver had responded that the information the Clerk had provided showed that there was considerable support from within the community for the new Community and Sports Pavilion and this was very important. However, the main issue seemed to be a lack of confidence that the necessary funding could be achieved.

In short Mrs Weaver had informed that the evidence of local support was there, the planning permission was in place and all that was missing was the formal resolution of the Council that this was the course of action that it was going to take i.e. pursuing the development. If Members had concerns then they could be fed into the development process but once the journey had begun that should lessen.

Mrs Weaver had examined the Joint Use Agreement for the Golden Jubilee Park which she considered to be a little basic. She informed that it did not seem to provide for dispute resolution or for the termination of the agreement by either party. She considered that both of those points need to be addressed.

Mrs Weaver had provided the Clerk with the relevant paperwork required if the Council decided to apply for a loan from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) including a fee calculator. Councillor Mrs K Ford reported that she had asked the Responsible Financial Officer, Mr Graham Hudspeth for his advice. She had asked him how much he considered the Council could afford to borrow considering the other substantial financial commitment the Council had made to refurbish the children's play area. Mr Hudspeth had responded as follows:

'It's not how much the Council can afford it's what the Council agrees to do. It's all a question of balancing the budget and the willingness of the Council to go ahead with the investment.

After taking into consideration what other spending you have in mind in the coming years you have no substantial funding to put towards the building of the Pavilion. Depending on whether you can get grants or funding the Council will still have to raise say £350,000. To finance that through the PWLB over 30 years (the probable life of the building) will cost you £17,250 a year. That's currently 21% of your budget and equates to £15.60 per band D household per year.

To pay for this the Council must decide whether to either cut back on spending in other areas or increase the Council Tax by almost 28% (or some point between).

Along with servicing the loan the Council needs to take into consideration the cost of running and maintaining the building. So far we have seen no business plan as to how this is going to be achieved. The Council would need long term commitments from the Cricket Club, Uniformed Groups and others to meet these costs or are they going to be funded by precept? If, say, the Cricket Club was to be allowed to run the Pavilion it would have to be shown how it would be able to pay for the upkeep of the building, etc. and how it would allow access to the building for other, possibly competing, groups.

There are still a lot of questions to be asked about the affordability of the Pavilion. I'm sure that all would like to see first class facilities available in the Golden Jubilee Park but is the Council willing to burden the whole population of Saughall and Shotwick Park with the cost of a facility that may be only used by a few?'

The Council revisited the various options, considered funding opportunities available to it and whether it required any legal advice before it agreed how to proceed. Members were asked to consider whether there were any groups or individuals in the village who would be willing to lead the new build project as they had been informed that it was now the intention to disband the SCASP Committee. A discussion ensued about how involved the Council should be in the project, whether it wished to offer support at arms-length or be fully involved, driving the project forward and who should own the new building

Members noted that there were cost implications if the planning permission which had been provided for a three year period lapsed and a further planning application had to be submitted.

Brian Huxley informed that there seemed to be a lot of confusion. The project was to build a community building that the Cricket Club would use not a cricket pavilion. He suggested that if the Council proceeded with this project it should be renamed to avoid any further confusion.

Designmix informed that to resubmit the plans it would charge a one off fee of £1,925. This was based on £385 per 75msq or part thereof. The building was 319msq. The original fee had been £770. It was noted that if the Parish Council was the applicant it would receive a 50% reduction in this charge.

Designmix had also informed that an extension to its license to use the designs for a further three years, as well as preparing and submitting the application (the licence to use the designs would be granted for the three year period of the planning approval) would attract a fee of £1000 excluding vat.

The Clerk had asked the Planning Department for advice on what was required if a new planning application was submitted as the current planning permission for the Community and Sports Pavilion would expire on 19 June 2016. Liz Snead, a Planning Officer at Cheshire West and Chester Council had informed that the following information would be needed:

- All the plans submitted previously;
- A Site Layout Plan;
- An updated Design and Access Statement;
- A Green Belt Statement including very special circumstances (this had been provided previously so could be updated);
- A Tree Survey identifying trees to be retained/removed/replaced with value;
- Biodiversity Report; and
- A Landscaping Plan – but this might be able to be done by condition as it had previously.

Councillor Brian Crowe informed that he was committed to the project to provide a Community Building in the Golden Jubilee Park. He informed that, over the years, he had given £12,000 to the project from his Councillor Grant Allocation. This had covered the Architect's fees and the original planning application fees. Since then he had deposited £16,000 with the Council to be used on the project. If the project was not to go ahead he would spend that £16,000 in Saughall village on various projects which were on hold at the moment.

With regard to the ownership of any new building, Councillor Brian Crowe told the Council that it was obvious that if it was going to borrow money to complete the project, it had to own the building as it would be the security for the loan. Time and time again funders that had been very

accommodating when considering the application had back tracked immediately they could see that the ownership question had not been clarified. Councillor Crowe sympathised with those on the Uniformed Groups Committee that had worked so diligently week in and week out making their Headquarters such a viable asset to the village but in this instance the Parish Council was the elected representatives and the owners of the Golden Jubilee Park. It had the ability to raise the money be it from loans or from the Parish Precept.

The Uniformed Groups Committee had to do exactly what it had done for years and years, work diligently to manage the building in a business-like manner for the local community. Councillor Brian Crowe had the greatest respect for all members of that Committee for the work it continued to do and nobody said thank you enough nowadays. Therefore, he was more than happy to say to its members....Thank You for doing such a great job for us all.

Brian Huxley urged the Council to get behind Councillor Brian Crowe as he had committed his funding. He asked the Council to put the same level of commitment into the project.

Councillor Brian Crowe advised the Council to continue with the project and not to dither. There had been dithering previously and as a consequence the cost of the project had increased by £100k. The Council could borrow money and raise funds. If it went ahead Councillor Crowe informed that he would continue to provide support.

RESOLVED: (unanimously) That

- (1) the Council will reapply for planning permission for the Community and Sports Pavilion;
- (2) the Council will bear the costs associated with the planning application at (1) above;
- (3) the Council is committed to working with any group that comes forward and is willing to take the project forward for the use of the wider community; and
- (4) the Council will explore the legal and community governance issues and ownership.

(b) Associated Matters

(i) Joint Use Agreement

Members noted the content of the Council's Joint Use Agreement with the Saughall Colts and the Saughall Cricket Club and the comments on it provided by the Chief Executive Officer of ChALC. Members agreed that it would be appropriate to review and revise the Joint Use Agreement.

It was noted that arrangements had been made with Cheshire West and Chester Council's Officers to obtain quotes for cutting the grass in the Golden Jubilee Park but that they had not been received yet.

RESOLVED:

That a Working Group (Councillors A Bailey, K Ford, J Knox and A Warrington) be established to review and revise the Joint Use Agreement and make recommendations to the Council.

(ii) Saughall Uniformed Groups' Headquarters

Mr Tony Summers informed that the Uniformed Groups had visited the County Record Office and found the Minute relating to the agreement about the Uniformed Groups Headquarters between the Council and the Uniformed Groups. Mr Summers read out Minute No. 53 as follows:

'NEW SCOUT HUT AND GUIDE HEADQUARTERS

Mr Alan Bailey attended the meeting to give a progress report on work ongoing which involved the erection of the new Scout and Guide Headquarters in Fiddlers Lane Playing Field.

The Clerk reported that the County Court had now issued the Court Order necessary for the agreement so that the Council could decide whether to renew the lease at the end of the four year period without the Scout and Guide's having any automatic rights on this. Therefore the agreement could be signed by the two parties and witnessed accordingly.'

The Clerk informed that all of the Council's records and files had been in its filing cabinets in the Committee Room at the Uniformed Groups' Headquarters when it had been damaged by fire and, consequently, the Council's copy of the agreement had been destroyed.

RESOLVED:

That the Working Group established at (i) above be requested to also review the arrangement with the Uniformed Groups and make any recommendations considered appropriate to the Council.

Standing Orders back in force.

(iii) New Perimeter Path

Councillor Mrs K Ford informed that Mr Paul Evans of Go Right Cycling had emailed her to inform her that because of personal reasons he was unable to commit to the Perimeter Path project at the present time. He would be back in touch at a future date.

The Council noted that if this project was to go ahead it would be necessary to draw up a leasing agreement with the local Children' Cycling Club.

RESOLVED:

That the position be noted.

(iv) Storage of Sports Equipment

Councillor Mrs K Ford informed that she had some sports equipment for use on the MUGA stored in her house. She had asked the Uniformed Groups' if it could be stored in the Uniformed Groups' Headquarters but they had not replied.

It was noted that to book the sports equipment people would have to contact the Clerk.

Councillor Mrs JE Storrar informed that she would store the sports equipment for the Council on her farm.