

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH COUNCIL held on Monday, 7 October 2019 at the Vernon Institute, Church Road, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor A Bailey (in the Chair)
Councillor Mrs K Evans
Councillor DF Holman
Councillor H Jennings
Councillor M Johnson
Councillor B Kerr
Councillor Mrs R Lowe
Councillor Mrs L Rutter
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar
Councillor A Warrington
Councillor Mrs JM Young
Councillor PP Young

92. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

PC Rob Brown
Cheshire West and Chester Councillor Simon Eardley
Dave Glavin, Internal Auditor
PCSO Wendy Leason

93. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

94. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 2 September 2019 be confirmed as a correct record.

95. CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk reported on the work she had carried out and the actions she had taken since she had published the agenda for the meeting of the Council held on 7 October 2019.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the Clerk's report be noted.

96. CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER COUNCIL (CWaC) – WARD COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Councillor Simon Eardley had provided a written report which was circulated to Members. The following was noted:

Highways Matters – Cheshire West and Chester Officer, Jim Gibbins

Following the September Council meeting of the Parish Council, Councillor Eardley had contacted Jim Gibbins at CWaC regarding the matters raised. His note to Mr Gibbins covered the Clerk's email regarding a detailed specification and price for a solar powered speed indicator device for initial installation on Hermitage Road and a detailed email from Councillor B Kerr regarding various matters for progression from the Highways Working Group. At the time of sending (13th September 2019), Councillor Eardley had received an 'out of office' notification from Mr Gibbins indicating he was away from the office until 23 September 2019. Councillor Eardley had since chased Mr Gibbins for a reply which, at the time of writing, he had still not received.

Councillor B Kerr reported that he remained unhappy that there had been no response from Mr Gibbins but agreed to wait for Councillor Eardley's report before any further action was considered.

Councillor Alan Bailey informed that the Police and Crime Commissioner would be happy to receive an application for funding towards a speed indicator device.

School Transport

The Clerk had passed on to Councillor Eardley all the correspondence received from concerned parents and he in turn had communicated this to CWaC officers. He had suggested to the officers that it might be prudent for them to attend the Parish Council meeting. Councillor Mrs JM Young had since followed this up which had resulted in an indication that they would seek to do so in November should the situation be ongoing. As Councillor Eardley had been unable to be present at the Council meeting on 7 October 2019, if a summary of the discussion was provided, as soon as practical afterwards, he would continue to pursue the matter with CWaC officials.

Daffodils - Funded from the CWaC Members' Budget

Councillor Eardley was pleased to confirm that an order for 3 bags of 500 daffodils had been placed on 27 September 2019 to the CWaC team. As indicated by Councillor Mrs JM Young, these bulbs were for planting at the following locations:

"Planting in the entrance to The Ridings from Hermitage Road, the entrance to Meadows Lane from Hermitage Road. The entrance to Saughall Hey from Church Road and the entrance to Crofters Way from Seahill. Down Seahill by the boundary sign and the entrance to the village off Parkgate Road."

Councillor Eardley would advise when the bulbs were available and the timescale for planting.

Re-wilding project

Councillor Eardley had been seeking to facilitate dialogue between Lex Greensill, his representatives and CWaC officers. This had been primarily via communication with the Rural Localities Team and Mr Greensill's representative, Dimitri Harrison. His understanding was that a teleconference to discuss the proposals would be set up for 4 October 2019 between Mr Greensill and Graham Pink, Director of Place Commissioning and Commercial Management. Councillor Eardley would ask for an update in due course.

Enforcement Action re 153 Hermitage Road, Saughall

Councillor Eardley had been asked to enquire about the current status of enforcement action at the above property. The most up to date position was as follows (as of 30 September 2019):

'The Section 215 notice was sent out on 4 September 2019. The owners have the opportunity to appeal the notice if they wish but must do so prior to the notices effective date of 5 October 2019. At this point in time I am not aware that it has been appealed but they do still have a few days.

Once the notice is effective (5 October 2019) the owners have until 16 November 2019 to carry out the works. This was to reduce the grass/weed/self-seeded tree height and to remove any vegetation of away from the boundary fences.

Let's hope that they carry out the work or we may need to look at other forms of action.'

Enforcement Matters at 122 Hermitage Road, Saughall

Councillor Eardley had enquired of the Planning Department what the current position was regarding this property. His understanding, at 27 September 2019, was that progress was imminent but he await confirmation of action being taken and would report to the Parish Council as soon as possible.

Willow Hey Drainage Issues

Andy Raynor, Principal Engineer - Highways Commissioning, had provided an update on the current state of play regarding the above on 18 September 2019 as follows:

"We have a meeting with Welsh Water on 1 October 2019. It was hoped this meeting would take place earlier but it has been extremely difficult to get all parties diaries aligned. The meeting is for the Council to put forward our proposals to resolve the flooding issues, with Welsh Water needing to legally

accept any run off water from the land drainage system. Morris Homes have declined the invite to attend a meeting unfortunately.”

Councillor Eardley had asked Andy Raynor for an update on this as soon as possible. Mr Raynor had also indicated to Councillor Eardley in another email that his view was that a resolution to the Willow Hey matters may well result in the problems at Fairholme Close being rectified.

Chris Matheson MP's office had also been in touch with Councillor Eardley (He had briefly discussed this drainage matter with him during an impromptu meeting in the House of Commons in September 2019) and he believed that the MP would be facilitating a meeting towards the end of October 2019 with interested parties, seeking a resolution. Councillor Eardley hoped to be in a position to attend this meeting, which he understood was now likely to take place on Friday, 25 October 2019 in the afternoon.

Councillor Bailey informed that he and Councillor Mrs JM Young would be attending the meeting with the MP on 25 October 2019.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Simon Eardley be thanked for his help and very informative report.

97. THE RE-WILDING OF SAUGHALL

Further to Minutes Nos. 64 and 80, it was reported that the Chief Executive of Cheshire West and Chester Council, Andrew Lewis had now responded to the Clerk's letter of 6 August 2019 regarding Mr Lex Greensill's proposed Saughall Park Project on green belt land including a request that he reconsider his position on only leasing those parcels of land indicated on the map provided, instead of selling them as he had originally intended.

Members were very disappointed with the content of Mr Lewis' letter. They were astonished that he had informed, in his letter, that his Council's policy on the disposal of farms was under review and that he was aware of the Greensill's interest in acquiring land adjacent to their property but that no decision had been made on whether they could procure the land in question when the current tenancy came to an end in 2023.

The Parish Council was of the view that the content of the letter was factually incorrect and asked the Clerk to seek clarification from Mr Lewis as Members understood that, following Mr Greensill's enquiries, he had already been advised that the Principal Authority would sell one parcel of land to him and that it was only prepared to lease him the other piece he wanted to acquire. This was one of the reasons why the Clerk had written to Mr Lewis in August with a request that he reconsider his Council's position on the land he had offered to lease and let the Greensills buy it instead.

The Parish Council was surprised that Mr Lewis had referred to Mr Greensill four times as Mr Greenhill in his letter and that he did not copy the Local Member, Councillor Simon Eardley in, especially when he was copied in on and referred to in the letter sent to him by the Clerk. Members consider that it was very important to keep their Principal Authority Member in the loop and thought that Mr Lewis would have thought so too.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to reply to Mr Lewis, Chief Executive, Cheshire West and Chester Council along the lines detailed above.

98. POLICE

(a) Police Report

PC Rob Brown provided Members with copies of the Cheshire Constabulary's Saughall Newsletter – October 2019 which listed incidents and crimes committed between 3 September and 7 October 2019. These had included suspicious persons in Saughall Hey, threats of violence, drugs, a sexual offence, public order/threats to commit criminal damage and racially aggravated public order.

The Council also noted the detail of a telephone scam.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Police report be received; and
- (2) Police reports be posted on the Council's Facebook page when received, from now on.

(b) Parking Issues in Fox Lea and Vernon Close

Councillor M Johnson informed that there were still problems with motorists parking right up to the junction on both roads and that there was no enforcement.

RESOLVED:

That the parking issues in Fox Lea and Vernon Close continue to be monitored for the time being.

(c) The Police and Crime Commissioner's Meeting with Parish and Town Council Representatives held on Thursday, 5 September 2019 at the Cheshire Constabulary Headquarters

It was reported that Councillors A Bailey and A Warrington had attended this meeting. Items considered had included:

- An update on the Police Budget.
- Increased funding meant an increase in Police Officers and PCSOs.
- Concerns over delays with regard to the 101 service.
- Acton Bridge and Norley Parish Councils had acquired speed indicator devices and some funding for these had been provided by the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- PCSO's were told in Practice Guidance to hold weekly Surgeries with residents.
- PCSO's should spend 37 hours each week in the local community.
- PCSO's had authority to use the TruCAM Laser Speed Gun with Video Technology.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

99. WORKING GROUP REPORTS

(a) Business

Councillor A Bailey reported that the Working Group had met to consider the Business Plan and its Action Plan. These documents had been revised accordingly and included with the agenda. The Council was asked to agree the revisions.

Members indicated that they were happy with the order of the Council's key priorities detailed in the Action Plan.

RESOLVED:

That the revised Business Plan and its Action Plan be approved and posted on the Council's website.

(b) Golden Jubilee Park

Councillor Mrs JM Young informed that the Working Group had met with Parsons to inspect the cracks in the BMX Track.

Graphics were needed to show people how to use the facility. A quote had been received to supply the graphics and two No Dog signs (one to go by the Multi-Use Games Area and one by the entry to the Park).

Councillor Mrs JM Young reported that the new benches were now in situ fixed to paving stones. She also reported that the CCTV was a necessary expense because of the damage caused in the Golden Jubilee Park. However, it was noted that there were constraints over the use of images and various clarifications were needed before any decision was made to purchase such equipment.

The Council discussed a draft Grounds Maintenance Agreement provided by the Working Group and agreed a slight amendment.

Representations were made that legal advice be obtained on the two different draft agreements/contracts that had so far been provided for the Council's consideration.

It was reported that the Clerk had received an email dated 5 October 2019 from Janet Jones who considered that dog owners should be allowed to walk their dogs around the perimeter path. A copy of the email was passed to Councillor Mrs JM Young so she could bring its contents to the Working Group's attention.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be received;
- (2) the Working Group was requested to obtain a further quote for CCTV equipment to be located in the Golden Jubilee Park; and
- (3) the Clerk be requested to ask Councillor Simon Eardley if Cheshire West and Chester Council's Legal Department would be willing to offer advice on the draft Grounds Maintenance Agreements/Contracts; and
- (4) the Working Group be requested to consider the valid points that Ms Jones has set out in her email in respect of residents who have dogs to walk and make any recommendations to the next meeting of the Council scheduled for 4 November 2019.

{With reference to resolution (3) above the response from the Principal Authority was as follows:

"CWAC officers do not give legal advice to local town and parish councils. As a separate legal body, Saughall and Shotwick Park Parish Council will need to instruct its own lawyers if it needs advice before making a decision."

Consequently, the Clerk asked the Cheshire Association of Local Councils to seek legal advice from the National Association of Local Council's Legal Team on the draft Grounds Maintenance Agreements/Contracts. A response is awaited.}

(c) Communications and Marketing

It was noted that the Working Group intended to hold a meeting soon.

(d) Highways

The Council had already discussed the lack of progress made with the Principal Authority in respect of various issues including a speed indicator device. (Minute No. 96 refers.)

100. PLANNING MATTERS

(a) Planning Applications

The observations on the following planning applications were agreed and the Clerk was requested to notify Cheshire West and Chester Council - the Planning Authority, of them:

(i) 19/02364/FUL

Proposal: Two storey side extension.

Location: 11 Larchfields, Saughall.

‘The Parish Council has no objections to this planning application.’

(ii) 19/03403/FUL

Proposal: Rear and side extension.

Location: 3 Haymakers Way, Saughall.

‘The Parish Council has no objections to this planning application.’

(b) Planning Decisions

RESOLVED:

That the following planning decision(s), made by the planning authority, be noted:

(i) 19/01765/FUL

Proposal: Single floodlight to illuminate the south east elevation of All Saints Church between dusk and 11pm.

Location: All Saints Church, Church Road, Saughall.

“Approval.”

(ii) 19/00992/FUL

Proposal: Demolition of existing outbuildings and two storey rear extension.

Location: 206 Hermitage Road, Saughall.

“Approval.”

(iii) 18/04852/FUL

Proposal: Use of summer house as annexe, ancillary to Wilbur Cottage.

Location: Wilbur Cottage, Long Lane, Saughall.

“Approval.”

(iv) 19/01978/FUL

Proposal: Replacement dwelling and detached garage and erection of detached garage for The Croft.

Location: Croft Mews, 27 Crofters Way, Saughall.

“Approval.”

101. ACCOUNTS

(a) External Audit of Accounts 2018/19

The Council received the External Auditor’s letter dated 5 September 2019 and relevant paperwork following the successful completion of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the Council for the year ended 31 March 2019.

It was reported that the External Auditor had not found any matters that needed to be drawn to the Council’s attentions in respect of its 2018/19 Accounts.

RESOLVED:

That the successful completion of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return be noted and it be posted on the Council’s website.

(b) Payments made since the meeting of the Council held on 2 September 2019

RESOLVED:

That the following payments be approved:

<u>Financial Year 2019/2020</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>Cheque No</u>
PKF Littlejohn LLP (External Audit)	360.00	200196
Cheshire West and Chester Council (Contested Election)	2,119.90	200197
Cheshire Association of Local Councils (Councillor A Bailey – Training – The Next Steps)	75.00	200198
Bell Stone Masonry Ltd (Installing 2 Benches)	780.00	200199
Mr JE Davies (Litter Picking in September)	131.20	200200
Dutton’s Agricultural Contractors Ltd (Hedge Cutting – Golden Jubilee Park)	300.00	200201
Mrs S Hudspeth (Salary)	708.66	200202

Financial Year 2019/2020	£	Cheque No
Mrs S Hudspeth (Expenses)	174.77	200203
Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs	701.03	200204

(c) Receipts

RESOLVED

That it be noted that no receipts have been received.

(d) Cash to Bank Reconciliation

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the cash to bank reconciliation sheet be noted.

102. SAUGHALL HOUSING SURVEY

Councillor A Bailey reported that the response to the Housing Survey had been disappointing. Questionnaires had been distributed to all 1,280 households in Saughall and Shotwick Park but only 168 (plus the few questionnaires that were still at Lynda's Tea Rooms) had been returned even though people had been informed about the Survey via the Parish Council's notice boards and website and on Facebook.

The Council noted that it would not take long to analyse the questionnaires as there had not been many returned. Councillor Bailey informed he intended to ask Cheshire Community Action if the Parish Council could have a discount as its price for this had been based on the analysis taking 3 – 4 days.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

103. SAUGHALL MATTERS

(a) Remembrance Sunday – 11am on 10 November 2019

Councillor A Bailey reported that Reverend Christine Dutton, the new Methodist Minister had agreed to conduct the service at the War Memorial. The Morning Service at the Methodist Church would be held at 10am and then she would walk down to the Vernon Institute with some members of her congregation.

Refreshments would be available in the Small Hall at the Vernon Institute from 10am. 'The Gathering' would commence at 10.45am when the road would be closed for public safety.

Councillor Bailey also reported that the Poppies would go up on the lamp-posts on 11 and 12 October 2019. Some Members had agreed to help with this and would be assisted by the Saughall Rotary.

Councillor Mrs JM Young informed that there was also to be a further act of Remembrance on the same day at 2.30pm without any Clergy being in attendance. She invited Councillor Bailey, in his capacity as Chairman of the Parish Council to attend. He declined the invitation informing that he found this very difficult.

RESOLVED:

That the reports be received.

(b) Neighbourhood Management Committee

Councillor Mrs JM Young informed that there was little to report at the present time other than the arrangements for the fundraising Fish and Chip Supper scheduled for 13 December 2019 in support of next year's Summer Play Scheme.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(c) Virgin Media Works

Councillor A Bailey informed that Virgin Media was due to complete its entire works within the next two weeks.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(d) Vernon Institute Clock

It had been proposed previously that the Vernon Institute Clock be cleaned. Consequently, the Council considered quotes received from both The Cumbrian Clock Company and Smiths of Derby to carry out this work.

The Vernon Institute Clock's lighting was very poor so it was also proposed that it be replaced with a proper LED installation.

RESOLVED: That

(1) further consideration be given to the proposal to clean the Vernon Institute Clock when the Council sets its 2020/21 Budget;

(2) Councillor A Bailey be requested to provide the names of Electricians who are willing to quote for the Clock's LED installation work; and

- (3) Councillor A Warrington be requested to meet the Electricians at (2) on site whilst they assess the job to prepare their quotes.

(e) Saughall Signs

The Council was pleased that the village signs were all in place and in good order. The sign on the Parkgate Road was hidden by the hedge but the hedge would be cut back by Parish Councillors soon. Some new signs had recently been provided by Cheshire West and Chester Council.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Clerk be requested to thank Kay Parry, Cheshire West and Chester Council's Principal Engineer – Place for the new signage;
- (2) Parish Councillors be requested to cut back the vegetation obscuring the Saughall sign on the Parkgate Road; and
- (3) at the next Council meeting, scheduled for 4 November 2019, a list of Saughall street signs that should be replaced or refurbished be drawn up for submission to Cheshire West and Chester Council.

(f) Planters for Meadows Lane

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to contact Walkers' Plant Centre to ask that the new planters be now filled with plants and put in place, (as indicated by the yellow markings), making sure they are level.

104. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

The Council was aware that some concerned parents (Ms M Collins and Mrs K Parry) were in attendance at the meeting and had made written representations, as had a number of other parents, over the problems that children were having going to and from school on public transport. Consequently, it was proposed that Standing Orders be suspended in order that these parents could make oral representations at the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Council's Standing Orders be suspended so that parents can speak at this meeting.

105. CONTINUATION OF SAUGHALL MATTERS

(g) School Transport

Councillor Alan Bailey reported that in May 2019, without any consultation with the Parish Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council had announced that the dedicated buses from Saughall to Upton High School were being withdrawn after the Easter holidays.

Consequently, the Parish Council had made immediate representations and was informed that those services were no longer viable for the bus providers (Arriva and Stagecoach) and that any children who attended the School would have to use the normal service bus.

The situation was brought about because each pupil had to pay £3 per day to use the dedicated buses, including all the pupils picked up in Blacon. However, Blacon parents soon realised that they could buy a £6.50 weekly ticket for the service buses which ran every ten minutes from Blacon. Therefore, the dedicated school bus became unviable as there were no longer enough pupils using it.

Immediate problems had ensued and Ms M Collins and Mrs K Parry outlined issues of concern including: Children

- having to get on overcrowded buses;
- having to leave home very early to get buses;
- not being able to get on a bus because they were full;
- being late for school;
- coming home late from school;
- being left in Upton or Chester; and
- being made to wait until older people were on the bus before being allowed to get on.

Members noted that these problems would be made worse for the children during the winter months, when it was cold, dark and wet.

Councillor Mrs JM Young informed that she was in discussions with the Schools concerned and Cheshire West and Chester Council Officers in an attempt to try to resolve the situation.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the reports be received; and
- (2) John Ellis-Jones, Assistant Team Leader, Planning and Strategic Transport at Cheshire West and Chester Council be invited to the next meeting of the Council scheduled for 4 November 2019 to discuss the current problems associated with home to school transport in Saughall.

STANDING ORDERS BACK IN FORCE

(h) Grass Cutting in the Parish

Councillor A Bailey informed that Members of the Business Working Group were dissatisfied with the frequency of the verges and amenity areas grass cutting by the Principal Authority.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to ask Northwich Town Council and Sanctuary Housing's Avenue Services to provide quotes for an additional grass cut of the verges and amenity areas in the village.

106. PARISH COUNCIL SURGERIES

Councillor A Bailey reminded the Council that it had tried to hold a joint Surgery with the Police but it had not proved possible.

Councillor M Johnson informed that the problem had been that the Surgery had been scheduled for a Saturday evening which was not a good time to hold a joint Surgery.

Members had mixed view on the benefits of holding a monthly Surgery and on whether to hold them in conjunction with the Police and Fire Service. It was

RESOLVED:

That Parish Council Surgeries be reconsidered at the next Council meeting scheduled for 4 November 2019 and Members be requested to provide suggestions on the way forward.

107. MEETINGS AND TRAINING EVENTS

(a) Being a Good Councillor – The Next Steps – Wednesday, 25 September 2019 in Middlewich

Councillor A Bailey had attended this training event and informed that he had found it very useful and he had made some good contacts. Planning and how to run a meeting had been covered.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Bailey be thanked for his report.

(b) Cheshire Association of Local Councils' Annual Meeting from 6pm – 9pm on Thursday, 24 October 2019 at Middlewich Civic Hall

It was reported that Councillors A Bailey, M Johnson and A Warrington had agreed to attend this meeting and report back on its proceedings at the next meeting of the Council scheduled for 4 November 2019.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

- (c) Cheshire West and Chester Council's Highway Event – Getting to Know You – Streetcare and Highways at 6pm on Tuesday, 29 October 2019 at Cheshire View, Plough Lane, Christleton, Chester

It was reported that Councillors Mrs JE Storrar and Mrs JM Young had agreed to attend this event and report back on its proceedings at the next meeting of the Council scheduled for 4 November 2019.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

108. COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED

RESOLVED:

That the following communications be noted and action be taken as necessary:

- (a) Email dated 4 September 2019 from Andrew Cowan regarding Manchester Airport Future Airspace.
- (b) Signpost – autumn 2019.
- (c) Cheshire Rural Touring Arts – autumn 2019.
- (d) Email dated 17 September 2019 from Dave Raynor from the Charity Scope about textile recycling banks.

This could not be supported as there was already a recycling bank in the village.

- (e) Cheshire West and Chester Council's Museums, Exhibitions & Events October – January 2020.
- (f) Email dated 24 September 2019 from Hazel Merrill about an Induction Training Session for Councillors in Holmes Chapel on 26 November 2019 from 1.30pm – 4.30pm.

No one was able to attend.

- (g) Email dated 25 September 2019 from Tony Griffith about the Minutes of the last Council meeting.

Councillor A Bailey would telephone Mr Griffiths to discuss the contents of his email.

(h) Public Health Spotlight Stoptober October 2019.