

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH COUNCIL held on Monday, 4 November 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

Cheshire West and Chester Councillor Simon Eardley
Dave Glavin, Internal Auditor

109. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

PC Rob Brown
PCSO Wendy Leason

110. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs JE Storrar declared a personal interest in Agenda Item No. 10(b) Friday Club's Christmas Lunch by virtue of her being the Club's Secretary. (Minute No. 119(b) refers)

111. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 7 October 2019 be confirmed as a correct record.

112. 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 4 November 2019.

RESOLVED:

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

113. 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 discussed and noted:

Highways Matters

Although it had taken a little longer than anticipated to make progress on the matters raised with Councillor Eardley by the Highways Working Group in September, he was pleased to report that he had an indication from Cheshire West and Chester Council's Principal Engineer - Place Operations, Kay Parry, that she would meet with the Group in order to move various matters forward. A provisional date of 13 November 2019 had been identified for this meeting. The meeting date was to be confirmed for certain but the CWaC Highways Team had indicated as follows on the specific matters raised:

'In terms of a price and specification for speed indicator devices, the Council uses a local supplier TWM and we are able to obtain a price direct from them. I have previously met with Brian Kerr and explained to him about these types of devices and ultimately asked him what are the primary objectives of the Parish Council wishing to use these types of signs. I have attached for information the email that I sent to Brian which outlines some of the key concerns of local communities wishing to take ownership of these signs; however that does not mean to say that this cannot be done in the future.

The other issue we discussed this morning was the relocation of the existing 30mph speed limit further back from Fiddlers Lane so that the lower speed limit covers the playground area. I can tell you that Kay has supported this proposal in the past and on numerous occasions has asked my team to undertake a speed limit assessment to see if this meets the criteria which unfortunately at the time it didn't. It is only recently we have looked at this issue again and now have the support of Cheshire Police.

We also discussed the existing 40mph speed limit on Long Lane and some potential options to highlight the existing speed limit with enhanced signing and carriageway markings. Again, Kay would be the best person to liaise with and take this forward; however any potential options would need a financial contribution from the local Member and/or the Parish Council.'

Councillor B Kerr sought the Council's approval to advise Mrs Parry to issue the statutory notices in respect of reducing the speed limit by the Children's Play Area.

Daffodil Bulbs

The daffodil bulbs that Councillor Eardley had ordered from the CWaC Members' budget were now available. At the time of ordering he had indicated that assistance was available from the CWaC Streetcare team to help with

planting. He asked Members to let him know how they wished to proceed with undertaking this work, i.e. whether there might be some community involvement in the planting too. It would be good for all planting to be concluded by the end of November.

Councillor Mrs JM Young agreed to liaise with Councillor Eardley and All Saints CE Primary School regarding the arrangements for planting the spring bulbs.

Lodge Lane Flooding

Councillor Eardley was assisting residents with longstanding flooding problems at a number of properties on Lodge Lane. There was ongoing liaison with Sanctuary Housing and hopefully positive solutions would be forthcoming, not least owing to the damp being experienced in these properties and the problems / concern this raised for residents.

School Transport Issues

Councillor Eardley was grateful to Councillor Mrs JM Young for facilitating a number of discussions on the challenges of school transport from the village to local secondary schools, specifically Upton High School. In particular, she had organised an informal meeting between a number of concerned parents and himself on 15 October 2019. The discussions were ongoing in order to seek a way forward and a further meeting between CWaC Officers, parents and ideally local bus company representatives was being arranged. In addition, the whole policy of the Council around Home to School Transport was being considered by a CWaC's Scrutiny Sub-Committee which was due to report shortly. This may ultimately resolve the problems but not in the short term.

Willow Hey Flooding

Chris Matheson MP had arranged a meeting on 25 October 2019 which brought together a number of the interested parties who had been seeking a way forward with the flooding problems in this area which was of longstanding interest to the Parish Council. Councillor A Bailey and Councillor Mrs JM Young had been present together with representatives of CWaC, Welsh Water, Morris Homes and affected residents. As Members knew, this was a complex problem, but one way forward might have been to divert the water on a more permanent basis from behind Willow Hey to the mains sewerage system. Welsh Water had commented that this was not possible as their responsibility was limited to dealing with surface and property water only, not land drainage water which had the potential to overwhelm their system at the Willow Hey point or at least cause flooding elsewhere.

The long term resolution to this problem was a land drainage engineering one relating to the field at the rear of the property. There was no immediate resolution in sight but CWaC had engaged their respected consultants (Atkins) to survey the land to the rear of Willow Hey, produce a report and

make recommendations. It had been indicated that this would happen within two to three weeks of the meeting on 25 October 2019, so in mid to late November there should be further information available. Chris Matheson (and those who had been present) agreed to meet again in January/early February 2020 to review the situation further.

Councillor A Bailey commented that the meeting had been frustrated as the drainage problem had been ongoing since 2012 and no progress had been made. Local residents were suffering from an oversight that had been preventable as the Parish Council had brought CWaC's attention to the drainage issues when it had been a statutory consultee on the planning application and again when the housing was under construction. Councillor Bailey was surprised that the Parish Council had not taken legal action against the Principal Authority. It had been negligent but would not admit it. Councillor Bailey agreed to seek advice from the Cheshire Association of Local Councils regarding legal action/maladministration complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.

Planning Enforcement

In respect of 122 Hermitage Road it was noted that a retrospective planning refusal notice had been issued on 17 October 2019. Councillor Eardley understood that the next step would be the issuing of a new enforcement notice requiring demolition.

Remembrance Sunday

Councillor Eardley regretted that owing to attendance at the Civic Remembrance Service at Chester Cathedral on Sunday 10 November 2019, he would be unable to join the morning act of remembrance at the Vernon Institute. He would, however, join the afternoon service and was grateful for the opportunity to lay a wreath at that point to mark his respects. Councillor Eardley knew from comments he had picked up that the poppy on lampposts display had been well received and looked tremendous. He congratulated all who were involved with this excellent initiative.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Councillor Simon Eardley be thanked for his help and very informative report;
- (2) the Highways Working Group be authorised to advise Cheshire West and Chester Council's Principal Engineer - Place Operations, Kay Parry to issue the statutory notices in respect of the reduction of the speed limit by the Children's Play Area;
- (3) Councillor Mrs JM Young be requested to liaise with Councillor Simon Eardley and the All Saints C of E Primary School regarding the arrangements for the planting of the spring bulbs; and

- (4) Councillor A Bailey be requested to seek advice from the Cheshire Association of Local Councils regarding any possible legal action/complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.

114. THE RE-WILDING OF SAUGHALL

Further to Minute Nos. 64, 80 and 97, it was reported that the Chief Executive of Cheshire West and Chester Council, Andrew Lewis had now responded to the Clerk's letter of 10 October 2019 (regarding the content of his letter dated 9 September 2019 relating to Mr Lex Greensill's proposed Saughall Park Project on green belt land which the Parish Council had considered to be factually incorrect), in a further letter dated 25 October 2019.

Councillor A Bailey read out Mr Lewis' letter as follows:

'Thank you for your letter of 10th October. I have to say I was surprised by its tone. My letter was a fair reflection of the Council's position, and signified a welcome response to Mr Greensill's interest in our land.

Since I last wrote, Graham Pink, our Commercial Director and David Job, County Land Agent, had a useful and constructive teleconference with Mr Greensill and his consultant. Mr Greensill helpfully outlined the potential extent of his proposal. Whilst there has been no decision or commitment either to sell or lease any property, Graham and David discussed the Council's approach to dealing with disposals and provided further information to assist Mr Greensill in developing his proposals. We await a more detailed proposition, and commit to considering that with an open mind, and in keeping with the Council's wider policy objectives and financial obligations.

I hope this reply assures the Parish Council about the approach we are taking to this matter.'

Members agreed that the second letter sent by the Clerk seemed to have been very positively received in that the Principal Authority now had some clarity of what Mr and Mrs Greensill's project consisted of and matters were now proceeding at a pace with a firm offer to sell/lease land in the parish on receipt of a master plan and an agreement on price.

Councillor A Bailey reported that Mr Greensill hoped that the Parish Council would facilitate a Public meeting to put his project to a wider audience, possibly before Christmas. He had already employed a local person as a project manager to work alongside his land agent to put the plan together. The only dates that the Vernon Institute was free on an evening before Christmas were Tuesday 10th and 17th December 2019 these dates had been passed to Mr Greensill.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the contents of Mr Lewis' letter dated 25 October 2019 be noted;

- (2) Councillor A Bailey's report be received; and
- (3) the Council, in principle, supports Mr and Mrs Greensill's proposals for the re-wilding of Saughall and will facilitate a public meeting on a date to be agreed, hopefully before Christmas.

115. POLICE

(a) Police Report

PC Rob Brown provided Members with copies of the Cheshire Constabulary's Saughall Newsletter – November 2019 which listed incidents and crimes committed between 8 October and 4 November 2019. These had included an attempted burglary and two incidents of shoplifting.

Members were also made aware of how not to become a victim of burglary through their use of social media. It was imperative to think carefully before posting their whereabouts but more importantly they should check their social media privacy settings so they knew who they were telling!

RESOLVED:

That the Police report be received.

(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 be not included on future Council agendas.

116. WORKING GROUP REPORTS

(a) Business

Councillor A Bailey reported that the Working Group had not met since the last Council meeting. It would be meeting in late December 2019/early January 2020 to review the 2019/20 budget and to discuss proposals in respect of the 2020/21 budget.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(b) Golden Jubilee Park

(i) The Car Park

Councillor Mrs JM Young informed that a small area of the car park was causing problems and presented a health and safety hazard. The area around the Uniformed Group's Headquarters had poor drainage and puddles of water made it impossible for people to make their way into the building.

Although the resurfacing of the car park was a priority for the Council and may be carried out during the next Financial Year, there was an urgent need to repair the area in question in advance of the resurfacing work. This could be done relatively cheaply using planings.

RESOLVED:

That the area of the car park with the substandard drainage be repaired using planings as soon as possible.

(ii) Annual Inspection of the Play Area

Alan Dymond had carried out the Annual Inspection of the Play Area and the Council had regard to the report he had provided following it. Members' attention was drawn to a problem with the seat on the Aerial Runway which would be repositioned and to two small areas of damage to the wet pour surface that would be monitored.

It was noted that the plaque was now back in place on the Co-op's tree.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(iii) Grounds Maintenance Contract/Agreement

The Council considered the two different versions of a draft Grounds Maintenance Contract/Agreement drawn up between itself and the Cricket Club. It was reported that as Members were unsure on how to proceed as they had two possible options, the Clerk had sought legal advice from the National Association of Local Councils via the Cheshire Association.

RESOLVED:

That legal advice from the National Association of Local Councils on the draft Grounds Maintenance Agreements/Contracts be awaited.

(iv) CCTV System

Two quotes had now been received from local firms for the installation of a CCTV system in the Park. It was hoped that if the equipment was installed it would help to reduce the increasing vandalism that was occurring. There were a number of legal loopholes to be gone through but it was proposed that the Council follow that course of action.

RESOLVED:

That the procurement of CCTV equipment be considered when the Council sets its budget for 2020/21.

(v) A Proposal to Allow Dog Walking around the Perimeter Path

An email dated 5 October 2019 had been received from Jan Jones proposing and putting forward a case for dogs on leads to be allowed to walk around the perimeter footpath. Ms Jones reminded Members that the Park should be there for the enjoyment of all Saughall residents to use and not just specific groups and that they should be encouraging everybody to get fit, and keep safe at the same time. Ms Jones considered that responsible dog walkers should not be prevented from using this area.

The Council debated this at length and it was

RESOLVED: (10:2) That

- (1) for a six month trial period running from 1 January 2020 dog walkers be allowed to walk their dogs on leads around the perimeter path; and
- (2) whether or not the activity at (1) above continues after 30 June 2020 be dependent on how well the trial goes and the findings of a review that the Council will carry out in May 2020.

(c) Communications and Marketing

Councillor DF Holman provided a report on proposed improvements to the Council's website which was now twelve years old.

The Council also discussed the Newsletter publication and were informed that its Editor, Anna Manning, was open to suggestions on how to make it look more attractive.

The latest publication of the Mollington and Saughall Handbook had the agreed banner headline that the Parish Council's Newsletter was inside, missing from its front page again.

It was reported that not all properties in Saughall received the Mollington and Saughall Handbook.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the proposed improvements to the Council's website be approved and Councillor DF Holman be requested to liaise with the Webmaster in order to bring them about;
- (2) the Clerk be requested to remind Chester Handbooks to include the banner headline on the front page of the Handbook when the Parish Council Newsletter was included in its publication; and
- (3) the Clerk be requested to ask Chester Handbooks to deliver some Mollington and Saughall Handbooks to Lynda's Tea Rooms at the Vernon Institute so interested parties can pick a copy up from there if they did not have one delivered.

(d) Highways

The Council had discussed Highway Matters, earlier in the meeting, including the lack of progress made with the Principal Authority in respect of various issues including a speed indicator device. (Minute No. 113 refers)

117. PLANNING MATTERS

(a) Planning Applications

The observation on the following planning application was agreed and the Clerk was requested to notify Cheshire West and Chester Council - the Planning Authority, of it:

(i) 19/03811/FUL

Proposal: Cherry (G1 Tag 760) – Reduce height by 3m and crown lift.
Apple (G1 Tag 761) – Remove stump.

Location: Open Space in front of 10 – 18 Parkway, 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) 18/00268/FUL

Proposal: Replacement Dwelling (Retrospective).

Location: Land at 122 Hermitage Road, Saughall.

“Refusal.”

(ii) 19/02364/FUL

Proposal: Two storey side extension.

Location: 11 Larchfields, Saughall.

“Approval.”

(iii) 19/02400/FUL

Proposal: Single storey front extension and replacement of garage with garden room and store.

Location: 7 Eastfields, Saughall.

“Approval.”

(c) Pear Tree Farm

It was reported that although Mike Bell had agreed to tidy up the site, it still remained an eyesore.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to contact Mike Bell again and remind him of his promise to tidy up the Pear Tree Farm site.

118. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

RESOLVED:

That the Council’s Standing Orders be suspended so that the Internal Auditor can speak at this meeting on a payment made.

119. ACCOUNTS

(a) Payments made since the meeting of the Council held on 7 October 2019
2019

RESOLVED:

That the following payments be approved:

<u>Financial Year 2019/2020</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>Cheque No</u>
Mrs JE Storrar (Mileage on 17 July 2019)	3.30	200205
Cancelled		200206
The Christmas Decorators (Franchising) Limited (Installation of 37 Column Garlands)	4,428.00	200207
Royal British Legion (2 Poppy Wreaths)	34.00	200208
Chester Handbooks Ltd (Newsletter Publication)	381.60	200209
Mr JE Davies (Litter Picking in October)	131.20	200210
Mrs S Hudspeth (Salary - November)	708.66	200211
Mrs S Hudspeth (Expenses)	95.10	200212
Mr JE Davies (Litter Picking in November)	131.20	200213
Mrs S Hudspeth (Salary - December)	708.66	200214
Cancelled		200215
Cancelled		200216
123 Connect	58.80	200217
(Upgrade mail boxes, Saughall.gov.uk Saughall Community Day Centre (Financial Contribution towards the cost of The Friday Club's Christmas Lunch)	100.00	200218
Walkers Plant Centre (Planter Refills, 2 New Planters and Plaques etc)	1,395.62	200219

Dave Glavin, the Internal Auditor pointed out an error where two payments to Nest had been recorded for the month of August 2019 when one of them related to September 2019. The Clerk informed that she would ensure that this was corrected before the next Ordinary Meeting of the Council scheduled for 7pm Monday, 6 January 2020 when Members would consider the payments made again.

STANDING ORDERS BACK IN FORCE

(b) Friday Club's Christmas Lunch – Financial Contribution

RESOLVED:

That Saughall Day Centre be provided with a donation of £100 towards the cost of the Friday Club's Christmas Lunch.

(c) Receipts

RESOLVED

That it be noted that the Uniformed Groups had provided a cheque for £12 which was one year's rent.

(d) Cash to Bank Reconciliation

RESOLVED:

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

120. SAUGHALL HOUSING SURVEY

Councillor A Bailey informed that there was nothing to report.

121. SAUGHALL MATTERS

(a) Remembrance Sunday

(i) Service – 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.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(ii) Poppies on Lamp-Posts

The poppies had been put up on the lamp-posts by Councillors and members of the Saughall Rotary. They were attractive and had been very well received. Arrangements had been made to take the poppies down a week after Remembrance Day.

However, it was reported that Tony Summers had emailed the Clerk on 18 October 2019 to complain that no poppies had been put on the lamp-posts in 'Little Saughall'. He saw this as a total lack of respect for the fallen from this part of the village.

The contents of Mr Summers' email was discussed, along with the health and safety issues associated with putting poppies on lamp-posts in this part of the village and although there was some disagreement it was

RESOLVED: That the Clerk

(1) be requested to order an additional 40 poppies to be put on lamp-posts next year; and

(2) be requested to inform Mr Summers of the action being taken.

(b) Christmas Lights Switch-On – 5pm on Friday, 29 November 2019

Councillor Mrs R Lowe provided the Council with a report on the arrangements being made for the Christmas Lights Switch-On event. It was noted that there would be 20 good quality stalls in the main hall and outside of the Vernon Institute. There would be entertainment from the children's Diddi Dance Troupe and Lynda's Tea Room would be open. There would also be a mobile bar and a hog roast on site.

Santa would be there in his Christmas Grotto and families who had children with additional needs would be offered an opportunity to visit him, prior to the switch-on.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

(c) 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.

(d) Saughall Signs

The Council was requested to provide Cheshire West and Chester Council with a list of street signs that should be replaced or refurbished.

RESOLVED:

That this item of business be included on the agenda for the next Ordinary Meeting of the Council scheduled for Monday, 6 January 2020.

(e) Grass Cutting in the Parish

Councillors A Bailey and PP Young had accompanied two different contractors around the village so they could show them the grassed areas and explain to them what work they wanted them to quote for. It was noted that it was logistically impossible to arrange additional cuts to those provided by Cheshire West and Chester Council because it was not known when the Principal Authority would actually cut the grass in the village. Mark Brazil the Senior Manager – Environmental Commissioning and StreetCare had informed that he aimed for a three week cut from mid-March to October, with a potential cut or cuts in the winter, depending on the mildness of the winter months.

Members considered that the answer may be to arrange for a contractor to take over all grass cuts.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk be requested to ask Mr Brazil:

- (1) what the schedule of works are along with the frequency of grass cuts that he is required to carry out in Saughall each year; and
- (2) whether it is possible to increase the frequency of Cheshire West and Chester Council's grass cuts, as there have been a lot of complaints about long grass this year.

122. PARISH COUNCIL SURGERIES

The Council gave consideration to whether to continue to hold regular Parish Council Surgeries. Views were mixed but on the whole it was considered that accessibility was a good thing and so it was

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Parish Council Surgeries be trialled for the six month period – January to June 2020 and then there will be a further review; and
- (2) Councillor A Bailey be requested to preside over the next Parish Council Surgery being held between 10.30am and 11.30am on Saturday, 4 January 2020 at the Farmer's Market in the Vernon Institute and bring a report on its proceedings to the next Ordinary Council Meeting scheduled for 7pm on Monday, 6 January 2020.

123. MEETINGS AND TRAINING EVENTS

- (a) Cheshire Association of Local Councils' Annual Meeting from 6pm – 9pm on Thursday, 24 October 2019 at Middlewich Civic Hall (CW10 9AS)

Councillor A Bailey had attended this event and informed that:

- there had been problems with the venue and the microphones;
- he had not been successful in being elected a Board Member but he would stand again in the future; and
- the Principal Authority's consultation on local enforcement had resulted in Town and Parish Councils asking for funding to go with the enforcement action. The Motion had fallen.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Bailey be thanked for his report.

- (b) 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

Councillors A Bailey, Mrs JE Storrar and Mrs JM Young had attended this event and reported that the Principal Authority wanted complainants to log their complaints on its website. They had been informed that the new system in place now was a big improvement on the previous one.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

- (c) Cheshire Community Action from 9.30am to 11.30am on Wednesday, 6 November 2019 at Comberbach Memorial Hall.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor A Bailey be requested to attend this meeting and report back on its proceeding to the next Ordinary Meeting of the Council scheduled for 7pm on Monday, 6 January 2020.

124. OPERATION LONDON BRIDGE

Councillor A Bailey reported on Operation London Bridge a code name that referred to the plan for what will happen in the days after the death of Queen Elizabeth II. He informed that he would discuss this and the possibility of opening a Book of Condolence in the village with the Church and report back to the next Ordinary Meeting of the Council scheduled for Monday, 6 January 2020.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

125. COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED

RESOLVED:

That the following communication be noted:

- An email dated 9 October 2019 from Amy Dutton regarding the noise during the last Council meeting on Monday, 7 October 2019.

126. NEXT MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Councillor A Bailey reported that there would be a Special Meeting of the Council at 7pm on Monday, 2 December 2019 to consider Awards and Rewards. He would be sending the agenda out on this occasion via email.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.