

# Little Stanney & District Parish Council

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting** held on Monday 23 January 2012 at 7.30pm at Little Stanney Village Hall

**PRESENT:** Councillors Roy Greenwood (in the Chair), David Astbury, Linda Carter, Paul Carter, John Glazzard, John Jones, Clive Lipscombe, Peter Mountford, Judith Thomas and Ken Whitehouse, Mrs Pauline English (Parish Clerk). There were three members of the public present.

## 12.01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Martin Roberts

## 12.02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

## 12.03 OPEN FORUM

**Wervin Caravan Park:** Residents were concerned about the number and frequency of inspections, the short deadlines given for work to be completed and the lack of consultation by CWaC. It was agreed to monitor the situation and bring this issue back to the next meeting.

## 12.04 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 22 November 2011 be confirmed as a correct record. Arising from the Minutes:

- (1) **ChALC Chester Branch Meeting:** Councillors were reminded that the next ChALC Chester Branch Meeting would be held on Wednesday 15 February 2012 at 7.30pm at HQ, Chester. Steve Robinson, Chief Executive of Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC), would be present at the meeting to answer questions. Councillors Glazzard and Lipscombe would attend on behalf of the Parish Council.
- (2) **Bridleway No.2a, Stoak** – (Minute 11.70(1) refers) The Clerk had received a reply from Andrew Miller MP, enclosing a letter from Steve Robinson, Chief Executive of CWaC. A separate letter had been received from Aleta Steele, Head of the Solutions Team, enclosing some data from a site inspection undertaken in January 2011 as part of the ongoing investigation of the claim by a local resident regarding an accident to her horse. From the letters the Parish Council assumed that CWaC would take no further action and that the bridleway surface would remain as it is. It was RESOLVED that under the Freedom of Information Act the Clerk should ask CWaC to provide a copy of the written agreement between the Council and the landowner regarding the surface of the path.

## 12.05 PLANNING AND LICENSING

### (1) Planning Applications Received:

11/05524/FUL	Proposed single and two storey side and rear extensions. at Chapel House Farm, Wervin Road, Wervin, Chester CH2 4BP - PERMISSION
11/05012/LDC	Modular building and generator at Transmission Station M53 to M56 Link Road, Chester (Croughton) – PERMISSION
11/05840/FUL	Construction of two (2 storey) car dealerships; comprising showroom, workshop, MOT testing, administrative offices, ancillary space and a wash/valet outbuilding plus external car parking, used vehicle sales displays, access and manoeuvring areas on Land Adjacent To Audi Cheshire Oaks, Longlooms Road, Ellesmere Port Cheshire
12/00023/FUL	Single storey side extension at Cobtree, Whitby Lane, Backford Chester, CH1 6PH

### (2) Decisions:

11/03831/FUL	Two storey side extension at Braemar, Strawberry Cross, Whitby Road, Backford, Chester CH1 6PH - PERMISSION
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(3) **Awaiting Decision:**

11/04081/WAS	Development of incinerator Bottom Ash Aggregate facility including external stockpile areas, site access and car parking provision, surface water management systems, site boundary fencing and other ancillary development, landscaping and associated highways infrastructure (including associated noise attenuation fence) at Plot 4, Ince Resource Recovery Park, Grinsome Road, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire
11/04083/OUT	Outline application for erection of a Timber Recycling Plant with car parking, landscaping and associated infrastructure at Plot 3, Ince Resource Recovery Park, Grinsome Road, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire
11/05048/FUL	Temporary Access Road for Construction Traffic, Associated Temporary Bridge Link, Acoustic Attenuation Fence & Drainage Realignment at Ince Resource Recovery Park, Grinsome Road, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire (Neighbouring Authority)

**12.06 HIGHWAY MATTERS AND AMENITY CLEANING**

- (1) **Highway/Streetscene issues from last meeting:** A number of issues had been raised at the last meeting, which had been followed up with CWaC Highways Officers and the police.
- (a) **Delivery Vehicles outside the Bunbury Arms:** Problems with vehicles delivering goods to the Bunbury Arms blocking the road by parking on Little Stanney Lane outside the pub had been referred to Chris Burnham, Cheshire Police. He had visited the Bunbury Arms on 12 December with the intention of speaking to Mrs Frain but unfortunately she was "not available." He had spoken to a member of staff, explaining the reason for his visit and left a business card. He had been assured that the message would be passed on to her. If deliveries continued to be undertaken from the road rather than the car park, the Parish Council was requested to let PC Burnham know and he would revisit.
  - (b) **White Lining at the junction of the A5117 and Stanney Lane:** Lane markings at the junction of the A5117 with Stanney Lane (by the village hall) were very faint. It was proposed that the A5117 from the new surface through to the A41 roundabout would be surface dressed this Spring and the whole route would be re-lined at this stage.
  - (c) **Traffic Lights on A5117 at Stanney Woods Avenue** were obscured by foliage giving the appearance that the lights were on red permanently. The Area Network Steward had cut back a large proportion of the foliage and the signal heads were now clearly visible.
  - (d) **Lay-by on Little Stanney Lane** had been tarmaced and appeared to be being used as a car park. CWaC had confirmed that this was not a new layby but simply a matter of the contractors having excess material left over following surfacing works and 'improving' an existing area that was utilised in the same way. Councillors were of the opinion that the layby, which was previously a grass verge, had not formerly been used for parking. However, the new surface encouraged vehicles to park there on a regular basis, often protruding onto the road and causing road safety problems as the layby was very close to the junction with the A5117.
  - (e) **Pavement between Rake Lane and Little Stanney Lane** was in very poor condition. The area was being assessed for possible inclusion in a future year's programme. The Area Network Steward had been asked to monitor the area and arrange any necessary remedial works should it be deemed unsafe.
  - (f) **Collection of waste from Playing Field and Nature Park:** Bins were not being emptied. This has been noted and the bins would be emptied in future.
  - (g) **Parish Council Amenity Cleaner's Wheelie Bin:** The Amenity Cleaner's storage bin had been removed to Guilden Sutton Depot to allow the resurfacing of the car park to take place. The Village Hall Committee had made it clear that they did not want the bin back in its old place in the car park, because they did

not want the collection vehicles driving over the new surface. However, they did offer to house it close to the gate to the right of the Village Hall where it could be emptied without the collection vehicle having to enter the car park. In the meantime Streetscene had suggested that the bags should be left at the entrance to the bridleway on Little Stanney Lane. The Amenity Cleaner had discussed this with the collection operative, who knew nothing about this arrangement, and they had agreed between them to continue to leave the sealed bags at the bus stop opposite the Village Hall until a more permanent arrangement could be made. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should approach the Village Hall Committee to request use of the storage area to the right of the Village Hall.

- (h) **Grass Verges in Stoak:** Andy Raynor had been asked about the removal of the flower beds that were previously maintained by former councillor Tony Griffiths. He was currently liaising with transport co-ordination as they managed bus stops etc and would contact the Parish Council once the issue was resolved.
  - (i) **Parking on Whitby Lane:** The problems caused by indiscriminate parking on the grass verge by occupants of Braemar had been referred to Steve Marks, Highways, who had ordered some white posts to be inserted into the verge. The occupants of Braemar had removed these on the day they were erected. The matter had been referred back to Steve Marks and Kieran Collins to take whatever action they felt necessary to resolve this issue, which had subsequently worsened. A response was awaited.
  - (j) **Reactive Sign on Little Stanney Lane:** Andy Raynor had asked the suppliers to test it.
  - (k) **Parking in Stoak Village:** Ongoing problems with parking in Stoak village had never been properly resolved. Andy Raynor had agreed to attend another site meeting with Stoak Councillors,
  - (l) **Trees bordering Wervin Caravan Park:** Andy Raynor would write to the owner about trimming the trees.
  - (m) **Mirrors opposite Church Lane, Stoak:** At the last meeting it was reported that the mirrors opposite the end of Church Lane had been lifted about 2' up the pole. After the meeting it had been discovered that the Vicar/Church had arranged for this to be done. No further action required.
- (2) **Application to claim public rights between Strawberry Drive and Stanney Woods:** CWaC were about to commence their investigation into this application and would be interviewing witnesses at the end of January. The investigation should be completed by 2 April 2012.
  - (3) **Hole in the road at Wervin:** It was reported that there was currently a large hole in Wervin Road, which was marked by two cones. The Clerk was asked to find out the reason for the hole.
  - (4) **Trees on Wervin Road:** It was reported that a number of trees along Wervin Road between Stoak and Croughton had been pruned recently. The branches had been left in the verge and were blowing onto the road. The Clerk would ask CWaC to remove the dead branches.

## 12.07 STOAK PLAYING FIELD AND NATURE PARK

- (1) **Maintenance of the Nature Park:** At the last meeting Councillor Jones had asked that further consideration be given at this meeting to the future maintenance of the Nature Park following the departure from the village of former Councillor Tony Griffiths. He offered to continue to maintain the grassed areas and keep the weeds at bay, with assistance from another local resident. It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council should continue to meet the costs of maintaining the mower and strimmer and any petrol costs, and should offer a small remuneration to the resident, the amount to be agreed at the next meeting.

- (2) **Flower beds in Stoak Village:** It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council should continue to provide plants for one of the flower beds in Stoak village. The Council had asked CWaC to remove the flowerbed by the bus stop and to provide a hardstanding for bus passengers.

## 12.08 CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER COUNCIL

- (1) **Whole Place Community Budget:** It was noted that that on 21 December the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had announced that Cheshire West was to be one of four pilot areas selected to test how community budgets would work and how this could lead to more efficient, effective and responsive local services. The submission to the DCLG had been made on behalf of a partnership including the Council, Health partners, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Services, Cheshire Constabulary, voluntary organisations and private sector representatives. The pilot would involve a review in 2012 of key local services with any new delivery proposals being subject to both local and national agreement and being rolled out over a three-year period.
- (2) **Community Governance Review:** It was noted that CWaC had appointed a Community Governance Review Committee to undertake a review of community governance arrangements across the whole of the borough. The Committee would carry out the work through a series of 'area-focused' community governance reviews to be completed in advance of the next scheduled elections in May 2015. Each review would be conducted in accordance with clear terms of reference which would outline the geographical area to be covered by the review as well as the matters on which the community governance review is to focus. The Parish Council agreed a response to be submitted to CWaC via a short questionnaire.
- (3) **Local Council Assembly:** CWaC had invited up to three representatives of every Local Council in the Borough to attend the first meeting of the Local Council Assembly which would be held at 7.00pm on Thursday 1 March 2012 at the Forest Hills Hotel, Frodsham. The event was likely to focus on the Localism Act; Community Budgets; the borough-wide Community Governance Review; and an update on the implementation of recommendations arising from the scrutiny review. It was RESOLVED that Councillor Astbury and the Clerk should attend.
- (4) **New Harmonised Waste Collection Service:** It was noted that May Gurney had been appointed as the contractor to deliver a new recycling and waste collection service in Cheshire West and Chester. The new service was based upon a 'kerbside-sort' system, allowing residents to recycle glass bottles and jars, mixed paper, cardboard, food and drinks cans, aluminium foil, mixed plastic food packaging, textiles, food and beverage cartons (tetrapaks), household and car batteries, spectacles, small electrical items, mobile phones, used cooking and engine oil, shoes, printer cartridges, garden waste and kitchen waste, from their doorsteps. Starting in April 2012, the 14-year contract would be rolled out in three phases over the following 12 months with Phase One: Former Vale Royal area starting in June 2012; Phase Two: Former Ellesmere Port and Neston area in August 2012; and Phase Three: Former Chester District area in November 2012. The Parish Council RESOLVED to inform CWaC of their opinion that the new contract would be a retrograde step for parishes in the Chester district who had only recently changed to an easily managed blue wheelie bin collection system and would now have to revert to boxes which for many were difficult to handle.
- (5) **"Living Well Together":** In response to the existing requirement to have a Sustainable Community Strategy and the new requirement to have a Health and Wellbeing Strategy, CWaC were inviting views on a strategy document which set out a joint vision for the future wellbeing of everyone living, working and visiting West Cheshire. Views were sought on whether the right joint priorities had been identified for the future wellbeing of our communities. The consultation period would run until 1 March 2012.
- (6) **Elimination of Double Taxation:** On 11 January 2012 the Executive had given initial consideration to the introduction of 'special expenses' charges, to take effect from 1 April 2012, in relation to specific concurrent functions carried out by Cheshire West and Chester Council in only part of the borough which are performed elsewhere by a

Parish Council or Chairman of a Parish Meeting. The three identified concurrent functions were Open Access Play Spaces, Christmas Lights and Police Community Support Officers. Parish Councils would be given the opportunity to comment on the proposals which will be considered at the Executive meeting on 6 February before a final recommendation was made to the Council meeting on 23 February 2012. The Parish Council RESOLVED to inform CWaC that, while they supported a recognition of double taxation, the current proposals were being rushed through too quickly and without sufficient detailed information to enable Parish Council to make informed comments, and a decision should be deferred.

- (7) **Standards and Member Conduct:** It was noted that the Localism Act contained new provisions on standards and codes of conduct for members of town and parish councils in England and abolishes the Standards Board for England.

## 12.09 OTHER CORRESPONDENCE/ISSUES

- (1) **Cheshire West CAB:** Cheshire West CAB had asked all Local Councils to consider making a one-off or annual financial donation to enable them to continue to support the many volunteers who provide advice and guidance to the community from their various offices. The Parish Council RESOLVED to offer £50.
- (2) **New Police Contact No:** It was noted that 101 was the new number for reporting non-emergencies to the police. This number should be used to report crime and other concerns that did not require an emergency response, such as a stolen vehicle, damage or vandalism to property, suspected drug use or dealing or to provide information about a crime. Calls to 101 would be charged at a flat rate of 15p no matter how long the duration of the call, the time of day or whether the call was from a landline or mobile phone. This number did not replace Crimestoppers (0800 555 111), which allowed a person to report a crime anonymously.
- (3) **West Cheshire Healthy Homes:** It was noted that West Cheshire Healthy Homes was the new name for Anchor "Staying Put", a locally based Home Improvement Agency whose primary focus was to support older people, vulnerable people or those living with a disability to remain living safely, securely and independently in their own homes. Services provided, at a cost of £12 per hour plus cost of materials, included Small Repairs and Handyperson, Gardening, Falls Prevention and minor Adaptations and Advice and Information.
- (4) **Local Government Resource Review: Proposals for Business Rates Retention Consultation - Government Response:** It was noted that the government had announced that it was to review the formula that helped decide how much money local authorities received to provide rural services. It was RESOLVED to ask CWaC whether Parish Council would benefit directly from any increase in revenue directly associated with businesses in their area.
- (5) **Rural Priorities for the Cheshire and Warrington LEP:** The Parish Council had been invited to send representatives to a half day forum at Reaseheath College on Monday 30 January 2012 at 9.30am. It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council should not be represented at this forum.
- (6) **Royal Garden Party 2012:** The Cheshire Association of Local Councils had been invited to nominate two persons to attend a Royal Garden Party to be held on Tuesday 22 May 2012. As in previous years Parish Councils were invited to nominate the Chairman or Town Mayor to attend. It was RESOLVED not to nominate the Chairman this year.
- (7) **Community Pride Competition:** The Parish Council had been invited to enter the Community Pride Competition for 2012. It was RESOLVED not to enter the competition this year.
- (8) **Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service:** Recently Cheshire Fire Authority had agreed to close the local emergency fire control room and instead support a Sub-Regional Fire Control, involving four of the five North West Region Fire Authorities. Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service had written to all Parish Councils asking for support in retaining

the existing service. Cheshire Fire Authority had also written putting the case for change. The Parish Council did not feel able to comment on the proposals.

- (9) **Publications etc:** Receipt of the following publications was noted:
- (1) *Cheshire Community Action Newsletter December 2011 and Annual Review 2010-11*
  - (2) *Clerks and Councils Direct – January 2012*
  - (3) *Cheshire Rural Touring Network Spring 2012*
  - (4) *Partnerships West bulletin – January 2012*

## 12.10 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

Under the terms of the Localism Act 2011, Parish Councils had an opportunity to guide land use and development in their area by the production of a Neighbourhood Plan. Councils did not have to take this opportunity but if they didn't any influence with the Borough Council could be further diminished. The first step was to define the area to be covered. Overlapping plans were specifically not allowed but Parish Councils could work together to prepare a single plan for more than one area. Any plan produced by Parish Councils would be subordinate to the plans of the Borough Council but would carry weight when considering planning applications. It was noted that CWaC were undertaking a review of current community governance arrangements across the whole of the borough and amalgamation of Parish Councils was a possibility, although it was not clear whether the initiative was expected to come from parishes or the borough. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should contact neighbouring parishes to find out what they were proposing to do with regard to Neighbourhood Planning.

NALC and the CPRE had issued a booklet "How to shape where you live: A Guide to Neighbourhood Planning" which looked in depth at the new powers that were becoming available to communities, and provided a step-by-step approach to getting a Plan up and running. An free e-learning course would be available at [www.ntselearning.co.uk](http://www.ntselearning.co.uk).

## 12.11 PARISH WEBSITE

Councillor Glazzard reported that since the meeting in September with Phil Orchard both he and the Clerk had tried to contact CWaC with regard to the setting up and hosting of the Parish Council's website. To date no further information had been forthcoming. A further report would be made to the next meeting.

## 12.12 THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE

The Village Hall Committee had approached the Chairman to ask whether the Parish Council would be interested in joining a small working party to discuss ideas for celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council should not become actively involved but should offer a donation of £100. After this was raised in November (Minute 11.88 refers) the Clerk had passed the information about lighting a beacon to the Vicar of St Lawrence's in Stoak who had expressed interest but was concerned about the cost of purchasing the beacon. It was agreed to put the Village Hall Committee in touch with the Vicar so that they could discuss working together.

## 12.13 FINANCE

- (1) **Budget and Precept for 2012-13:** It was reported that the Government did not intend to impose any capping principles on Local Councils for the year 2012-13. The Parish Council considered a draft budget for 2012-13 and RESOLVED that:
- (a) The Amenity Cleaner's wages for 2012-13 be increased to £6.35 per hour giving an annual wage of £3,302 gross.
  - (b) The Clerk's hours be increased to 3 per week and salary for 2012-13 be based on SCP24 slightly adjusted downwards to give an annual amount divisible by 12, giving a salary of £1,680 gross.
  - (c) The Clerk's monthly allowance should remain at £5
  - (d) Travelling expenses should be reimbursed at the rate of 45p per mile
  - (e) The budget for 2012-13 be approved as per the attached sheet
  - (f) The precept for 2012-13 be set at £6,000
- (2) **Appointment of Internal Auditor for 2011-12:** Helen Fielding, Wellfield Accounting Services, who had conducted the internal audit for the Parish Council last year, had

confirmed that there would be no increase in charges for the forthcoming year. The Parish Council RESOLVED to re-appoint Wellfield Accounting Services as the internal auditor for the 2011-12 audit.

- (3) **Unity Trust Bank – Changes to Bill Payments and Standing Orders:** It was noted that With effect from 1 January 2012 all banks must have a “Faster Payment” facility which allowed payments to be made on the same day if instructions were received before 4pm Monday-Friday.

- (4) **Payments:** The following payments were approved:

Cheque No	To whom paid	Amount
006	Taylor-made Castings – Picnic Bench	726.00
007	HMRC – Income Tax – September-December 2011	170.16
008	G Povey (Amenity Cleaner)-wages and expenses January 2012	273.36
S/O	Clerk’s salary – November	72.78
S/O	Clerk’s salary – December	72.78
009	Clerk’s expenses November 2011-January 2012	42.09
010	G Povey (Amenity Cleaner)-wages and expenses February 2012	257.19

- (5) **Receipts:** £605 from CWaC (Councillor Heatley’s allowance) for the picnic bench

#### 12.14 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 27 March 2012 11 at 7.30pm

#### 12.15 URGENT BUSINESS AND EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

- (1) In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 6(21) the Chairman ruled that the following item of business should be considered at this meeting, with the Press and Public excluded; and
- (2) It was RESOLVED that under the provisions of Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by the Local Government Act 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business:
- Church Commissioners’ Land – on the grounds of business affairs of a third party

### PART 2 – MATTERS CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

#### 12.16 CHURCH COMMISSIONERS’ LAND

The Parish Council had received a letter from the Church Commissioners seeking initial views on a proposal to develop a site in Stoak. The site was currently agricultural and would be marketed as such for twelve months. The Parish Council could not make any formal comments until a planning application was submitted to CWaC, but informally was not opposed to the proposed development subject to a suitable means of access to the site being agreed.