

Little Stanney & District Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 27 March 2012 at 7.30pm at Little Stanney Village Hall

PRESENT: Councillors Roy Greenwood (in the Chair), David Astbury, Paul Carter, John Glazzard, John Jones, Clive Lipscombe, Peter Mountford, Martin Roberts and Ken Whitehouse, Mrs Pauline English (Parish Clerk). There was one member of the public present.

12.17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Linda Carter and Judith Thomas

12.18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

12.19 OPEN FORUM

A resident expressed concerns about the strength of the bridge into Croughton as Arrowbrook were now using double decker buses. Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC) had inspected the bridge and appeared satisfied with it, but it was agreed that the Clerk should seek formal confirmation of this.

12.20 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 23 January 2012 be confirmed as a correct record. Arising from the Minutes:

- (1) **Delivery Vehicles outside the Bunbury Arms** [Minute 12.06 (1)(a)]: Vehicles were still being parked on Little Stanney Lane, outside the Bunbury Arms. The Clerk would refer the matter back to PC Burnham.
- (2) **Lay-by on Little Stanney Lane** [Minute 12.06 (1)(d)]: Vehicles parking in the lay-by were becoming a hazard to other road users. The Clerk would refer this back to Andy Raynor, CWaC.
- (3) **Parish Council Amenity Cleaner's Wheelie Bin** [Minute 12.06 (1)(g)]: The Parish Council's storage bin, which had been removed from the Village Hall car park prior to the resurfacing works, had not yet been located at Guilden Sutton Depot. The Clerk was in contact with Chris Rose, CWaC, to try to resolve the situation. The Village Hall Committee had agreed that the bin could be relocated in the small yard to the right of the Village Hall building, accessed by a separate gate.
- (4) **Grass Verges in Stoak** [Minute 12.06 (1)(h)]: Andy Raynor, CWaC, had referred the matter of the flower beds in the verge at Stoak to Transport Co-ordination, but no response had yet been received. The Clerk would contact him again.
- (5) **Parking on Whitby Lane** [Minute 12.06 (1)(i)]: This matter was being dealt with by Steve Marks, CWaC who was liaising with Councillor Thomas. At present a permanent solution had not been found.
- (6) **Parking in Stoak Village** [Minute 12.06 (1)(k)]: It was agreed that a site meeting should be arranged with Andy Raynor, CWaC, involving Councillors Linda and Paul Carter, John Jones and Martin Roberts.
- (7) **Trees bordering Wervin Caravan Park** [Minute 12.06 (1)(l)]: The trees had been cut back but visibility was still very poor.
- (8) **Mirrors opposite Church Lane, Stoak** [Minute 12.6 (1)(m)]: It was reported at the last meeting that the mirrors opposite Church Lane had been raised about 2ft. Councillors reported that they had received a number of complaints from residents stating that the mirrors were no use at that height. The Clerk would ask the Vicar whether there was a reason for the mirrors being raised and ask whether they could be lowered again.
- (9) **Application to claim public rights between Strawberry Drive and Stanney Woods** [Minute 12.06(2)]: The consultation would close at the beginning of April after which time CWaC's legal team would be asked to advise whether or not to proceed

with the making of the Order. The Parish Council had been advised that no response had been received as yet from the property owner and the Clerk had enquired whether this would hold up the decision or whether lack of response signified consent.

- (10) **Hole in the road at Wervin** [Minute 12.06(3)]: The hole had been dug to inspect the drains and the work had been completed quickly and the hole filled in.
- (11) **Trees on Wervin Road** [Minute 12.06(4)]: The Clerk had contacted the Highways Agency (HA), who were responsible for maintenance alongside the motorway, and had asked for the dead branches to be removed. The HA had promised to do this, but so far nothing had happened. The Clerk would send a reminder.
- (12) **Neighbourhood Planning** (Minute 12.10): Ward Councillor Graham Heatley had approached the Clerk to ask whether the Parish Council would be interested in putting together a Parish Plan for the Elton ward. It was **RESOLVED** that Councillors Astbury, Greenwood, Jones and Lipscombe and the Clerk should represent the Parish Council and that discussions should also focus on a Neighbourhood Plan.

12.21 PLANNING AND LICENSING

(1) Planning Applications Received:

12/00436/FUL	Replacement of existing french doors with folding sliding doors at 1 Ashwood Farm Court, Picton Lane, Wervin, Chester CH2 4HF – no objections
12/01253/FUL	Boundary fence to front of The School House, Shotwick-Frodsham Road, Little Stanney, Chester – no objections

(2) Decisions:

11/05524/FUL	Proposed single and two storey side and rear extensions. at Chapel House Farm, Wervin Road, Wervin, Chester CH2 4BP – PERMISSION
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) – 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. This was considered by CWaC's Strategic Planning Committee on 8 March when it was <u>DECIDED</u> that the Secretary of State should be consulted in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009 and subject to that agreement, the application be approved subject to (1) the prior completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement to secure financial contribution towards off-site highway improvements towards cycle way infrastructure and/or public transport infrastructure in the vicinity of the application site and financial contribution towards the Mersey Forest Initiative and (2) the conditions detailed in the report. At the meeting CWaC Members expressed concerns, about the hedge about the height of the hedges along the A5117, a sentiment shared and commented on by the Parish Council. The proposed height of the hedges was 1.2m high but the applicant had suggested reducing the height and laying the hedge to allow a clear view of the building. The existing hedges along part of the length were approximately 2.0m high and Members thought a hedge of uniform height would look better.
12/00023/FUL	Single storey side extension at Cobtree, Whitby Lane, Backford, Chester CH1 6PH - PERMISSION

- (3) **Undecided:** The following applications remained undecided by CWaC:

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

12.22 HIGHWAY MATTERS AND AMENITY CLEANING

- (1) **Bridleway No.2a, Stoak:** At the last meeting it was resolved to write to CWaC under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 asking for sight of the written agreement between Cheshire County Council and the landowner with regard to the surface of the bridleway. The request had been refused on the grounds that the Parish Council had already been supplied in previous correspondence with all the information held by CWaC on this matter. The Parish Council did not believe that this answer resolved the matter or that all documentation held by CWaC had been disclosed, but felt powerless to pursue the matter further at this time. It was agreed to leave the matter open for further discussion at a later date.
- (2) **A5117 Street Name:** The Parish Council had been asked by CWaC to comment on a proposal to name the A5117 from the M56 junction and to suggest an appropriate name/names. A meeting had been requested to discuss the proposals and it was RESOLVED that Councillors Astbury and Thomas and the Clerk should attend.
- (3) **Contract for Amenity Cleaner:** A new contract had been issued to the Amenity Cleaner on 1st April 2011 for one year. The contract expired on 31st March 2012 and the Parish Council RESOLVED to approve its renewal for a further year to 31st March 2013 on the same terms and conditions.
- (4) **Street Lighting at junction of A5117 and Kinsey Road:** Councillor Astbury reported that he found the lighting at this junction to be inadequate due to the width of the carriageway at this point. It was agreed that CWaC should be requested to either increase the illumination from the existing standards or to add an additional double armed standard in the central reservation adjacent to the traffic lights.
- (5) **Tree Planting on the A5117:** During the recent road works on the A5117 between Stanney Lane and the Strawberry Roundabout a number of trees had been removed. It was agreed that CWaC should be requested to use some of the money from the S106 Agreement with Marks and Spencer, and any other developments in the area, to plant additional trees along this stretch of road in the autumn.
- (6) **Fly-tipping on A5117:** Some time ago the Parish Council had raised with CWaC a problem with fly-tipping of two heaps of soil/rubbish on the grass verge on the A5117 opposite the entrance to Stanney Woods Avenue. CWaC had replied that the soil was to be used in the adjacent fields, but the heaps still remained. The Clerk would ask for them to be removed, and also for the road edging to be tidied up or replaced along this stretch of road.
- (7) **Phasing of traffic lights at M53 roundabout:** The traffic flow down the A5117 to the Motorway roundabout was stopped by two sets of traffic lights, the first at Kinsey Road junction and the second at the entrance to the roundabout. At present queues often formed at this junction. The traffic flow around the roundabout was relatively light and a reduction in the waiting time from the A5117 would help to keep traffic moving.
- (8) **Wheelie bins in road:** A complaint was made about wheelie bins being left in the road at Wervin, which caused an obstruction to traffic. It was pointed out that it was a requirement that all bins should be left at the roadside outside the property and that

there was insufficient space on the grass verge to accommodate the bins, thus necessitating them being left on the road.

12.23 STOAK PLAYING FIELD AND NATURE PARK

- (1) **Annual Inspection of Play Areas:** Morral Play Solutions had undertaken the annual inspection of the play area at Stoak for the past few years, the last two years as part of a package with other parish councils helping to keep the price down. The Parish Council RESOLVED to appoint Morral Play Solutions again this year at an estimated cost of £45 + VAT, subject to sufficient parishes entering into the agreement. There was currently no other accredited inspector in this area. It was reported that there was a problem with the chain supports on one of the swings and the Clerk would draw this to the attention of the Inspector and ask whether he could repair it.
- (2) **Maintenance of the Nature Park:** Over the past few weeks a local resident had cleared the undergrowth in the Nature Park and the new picnic bench had been installed. The resident concerned did not want to be paid for this work, but had asked the Parish Council to meet the cost of bulbs etc later in the season. This was agreed.
- (3) **Road Safety outside Playing Field:** Traffic coming into Stoak Village over the Motorway bridge was often travelling quite fast, especially in the mornings, and there was a potential danger to children leaving the play area. It was RESOLVED that CWaC be asked to paint "Slow" signs on the road in both directions.

12.24 CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER COUNCIL

- (1) **Local Council Assembly:** Councillor Astbury and the Clerk had attended the first meeting of the Local Council Assembly at Forest Hills Hotel, Frodsham on Thursday 1 March 2012. Councillor Eleanor Johnson, Chairman of CWaC welcomed everyone to the first Assembly and invited David Briggs, Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire, to set out the programme for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations within the Borough. Stuart Hulse, Chairman of ChALC, gave an overview of the way in which the Localism Act 2011 could affect Local Councils and Steve Robinson, Chief Executive of CWaC spoke about the changes that were proposed to make Cheshire West and Chester "Altogether Better". Finally Maurice McBride, Chairman of the Standards Committee and Simon Goacher, Monitoring Officer of CWaC spoke about the future of Standards and the requirement for Local Councils to adopt a new Code of Conduct by 1 July 2012. The general tone of the meeting was looking to the future and there could be some radical decisions made involving Local Councils. CWaC could save money by pushing functions down to parish level and joint commissioning was suggested.
- (2) **Diamond Jubilee Toolkit:** In order to support community activity taking place for the Diamond Jubilee, CWaC have produced a Toolkit which is full of information from insurance and funding advice to activity ideas. Cheshire Community Foundation had made £16,000 available to support community events (up to £100 per event). It was RESOLVED that the Toolkit and information about the grant be passed on to the Village Hall Committee.
- (3) **Taxi Licensing Consultation:** CWaC were consulting on proposals to harmonise standards and guidelines for taxi and private hire licences across the borough. People and organisation were invited to submit their views in a questionnaire, a copy of which had been circulated by email to all Councillors. The consultation would close on 16 April 2012. It was agreed that those who wished to comment should do so personally.
- (4) **Proposal for Standardised School Year:** Parish Councils and the public had been invited to comment, via a questionnaire, on proposals to standardise the school year for CWaC's Community and Voluntary Controlled schools. The consultation would close on 28 May 2012. Concern was expressed about fixing the Easter holiday as it was anticipated that parents might still wish to take leave around the Easter weekend when the two bank holidays would mean using up less holiday entitlement, and might take their children out of school to go away on holiday.
- (5) **Proposal for Changes to Spare Seat Charges for School Pupils on Education Contract Buses:** CWaC were consulting on a proposed increase to the spare seat places offered to School pupils on education contract buses. The formal consultation

period would run from Monday 19 March to Thursday 10 May 2012 with the final report being made to the Executive Member for Education and Children in late May 2012. Subject to approval by the Executive Member, the proposed date for implementation would be September 2012. No comments were offered on the proposals, but it was queried what the zoning arrangements would be for children living in Stoak when the Ellesmere Port Academy opened in September 2012. Some of the Stoak children currently attended Upton High School and did not qualify for free home to school transport because they were zoned to Cheshire Oaks High School. The Clerk would check with CWaC.

- (6) **Double Taxation:** On 23 February 2012 CWaC's full Council meeting had debated the proposal to introduce special expenses in an attempt to eliminate some elements of double taxation within the Borough. The Council had agreed to introduce a scheme for special expenses charges with effect from 1 April 2012 in relation to the Local Cheshire West and Chester Council provision of three identified concurrent functions – open access play spaces, Christmas lights and Police Community Support Officers. In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the special expenses charges would be levied only to those parts of the Borough where the identified function was not delivered by the local town or parish council and in accordance with the schedule detailed in Appendix D to the report, which had been circulated to all Councillors. Transitional arrangements would be put in place in respect of those parishes where there would be an increase in excess of 1% in the total Council tax payable by households as a direct result of special expenses payable in relation to open access play areas. The Director of Resources was authorised to negotiate with Parish Councils for the areas affected, the terms of a licence or lease on a peppercorn fee/rent for a term of up to 5 years, and to make a grant payment to any Parish Council entering into such a licence/lease a one off payment not to exceed £6,000 to meet the costs of maintaining the play area(s). The Special Expenses initiative stood referred to Corporate Scrutiny to examine in more detail its application and review how fairness in the allocation of costs might be improved to enable a fuller consultation for the 2013 budget. The Council was charged with reviewing best practice for the consultation of residents outside the statutory organisations such as Parish and Town Councils and setting out a structure for consultation which could be consistently applied.

12.25 OTHER CORRESPONDENCE/ISSUES

- (1) **Mid-Cheshire Footpath Society:** The Society would be holding its Annual General Meeting on 25 April 2012 at 7.30pm in Kelsall Methodist Church Room. A copy of the Chairman's Report April 2012 had been circulated with the agenda. The subscription for 2012-13 was now due and remained at £8 for affiliated Parish Councils. It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council should continue in membership and that Mr Les Torry be confirmed as the Council's representative.
- (2) **ChALC Chester Area Meeting:** The Parish Council had been well represented at the ChALC Chester Branch Meeting on Wednesday 15 February 2012 with Councillors Astbury, Glazzard, Lipscombe and Thomas and the Clerk attending. Steve Robinson, Chief Executive of Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWA), responded to a number of questions. One of the main issues for discussion was a proposal by ChALC to change the format of the Area Meetings and details had been circulated with the agenda. The Parish Council had no specific comments to make on the proposals, although a more local meeting was favoured.
- (3) **ChALC Response to Annual Meeting Motions:** The response to the Motions put to the ChALC Annual Meeting, including that from Little Stanney & District Parish Council, had been circulated with the agenda. The response acknowledged the difficulties faced by Councils and said that Streetscene Officers would be available to meet and discuss the implementation of the new standards. The Chief Executive gave an assurance that CWaC were committed to exploring innovative local service delivery options, including service delegation and devolution where there was a sound business case to do so.

(4) **Publications etc:** The following publications had been received:

- (a) *Clerks and Councils Direct – March 2012*
- (b) *ChALC Newsletters – February and April 2012*
- (c) *The Playing Field*
- (d) *Cheshire Community Action Newsletter*

12.26 PARISH WEBSITE

Councillor Glazzard reported that he had finally made contact with CWaC who had confirmed that the hosting service would be offered free of charge. However, he was still waiting for final details and advice on setting up the website.

12.27 FINANCE

(1) **Payments:** The following payments were approved:

Cheque No	To whom paid	Amount
S/O	Clerk's salary – January 2012	72.78
S/O	Clerk's salary – February 2012	72.78
11	Clerk's expenses January-March 2012	80.57
12	G Povey (Amenity Cleaner) – wages/expenses March 2012	257.88
S/O	Clerk's salary – March 2012	72.78
13	HMRC – Income tax January-March 2012	202.45
14	Cheshire West CAB – donation	50.00
15	Stoak & Stanney Community Association–donation–Diamond Jubilee	100.00
16	J Jones – Petrol for Mower / Cement for Picnic Table	36.46

(2) The following payment was approved in the next financial year:

Cheque No	To whom paid	Amount
17	Mid-Cheshire Footpath Society – Annual Subscription	8.00

(3) **Receipts:** None

12.28 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2012-13

The following dates were agreed for meetings in 2012-13

- Tuesday 22 May 2012 (Annual Meeting)
- Tuesday 24 July 2012
- Tuesday 25 September 2012
- Tuesday 27 November 2012
- Tuesday 29 January 2013
- Tuesday 26 March 2013