

Little Stanney & District Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 25 September 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 and Judith Thomas and Mrs Pauline English (Parish Clerk). There were no members of the public present.

12.65 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Martin Roberts and Ken Whitehouse and Ward Councillor Graham Heatley.

12.66 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

12.67 OPEN FORUM

No issues raised.

12.68 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 24 July 2012 be confirmed as a correct record. Arising from the Minutes it was reported that

- (1) **Community Governance Review** (Minute 12.48 refers) – The Clerk reported that the Community Governance Review of Little Stanney, Croughton, Stoak, Wervin, Thornton-le-Moors, Elton and Ince had been on the agenda of the Community Governance Review Committee on 12 September when the results of the residents' questionnaires and the Parish Council's initial submission had been discussed. The information was still being assessed and no further action had been agreed at the present time.
- (2) **Traffic and Visibility problems on Whitby Lane** (Minute 12.52(2) refers) – Councillor Thomas reported that the hatching had now been completed on the approach to the Strawberry roundabout and all that remained to be done was the painting of the roundels showing the speed limit. The police had been contacted about the continued obstruction of the pavement and had asked to be informed the next time it happened. This had been done and the perpetrator had been interviewed. The parking on the grass verge was not a police matter, but should be dealt with by the Highway authority (CWaC), although the police had confirmed that parking on the verge did constitute an obstruction. This matter had first been raised in January 2012 when CWaC had endeavoured to resolve the problem by putting white marker posts in the verge. These had been removed almost immediately by the householder. The Clerk was asked to contact CWaC Highways to ask for the white marker posts to be re-established in the verge or for some other permanent solution to be found.
- (3) **Website** (Minute 12.58 refers) – The Parish Council had been informed by Susannah Trueman that the website would be ready by the end of the week. To keep things simple the domain name would be registered as www.littlestanney-pc.gov.uk.

12.69 PLANNING AND LICENSING

(1) Planning Applications Received:

12/02133/FUL	Introduction of natural gas pipeline into Refinery, overground and underground, together with associated reinforced concrete foundations and structural steelwork (includes land to south and north side of A5117) – Stanlow Refinery, Oil Sites Road, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire CH65 4BD – no comments by the Parish Council
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(2) Decisions: The following decisions were noted.

11/05419/WAS	Construction of 2 combined heat and power engine kiosks and 1 ring main unit kiosk in association with other operational site improvements at Ellesmere Port Waste Water Treatment Works, Shotwick-Frodsham Road, Thornton Le Moors, Chester CH2 4JA - PERMISSION
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12/01931/FUL	Pigeon loft (retrospective) at 2 Bridge Farm Cottage, Croughton Road, Croughton, Chester, CH2 4HH - PERMISSION
12/01858/FUL	Construction of 1 No. Electrical Substation Kiosk in association with other operational site improvements at Ellesmere Port Waste Treatment Works, Shotwick-Frodsham Road, Thornton-le-Moors, Chester - PERMISSION
12/01742/FUL	Extension of existing slurry lagoon at Ashton House Farm, Wervin Road, Wervin, Chester, CH2 4BP – PERMISSION
12/02774/FUL	Extension of existing hayshed at Ashton House Farm, Wervin Road, Wervin, Chester – PERMISSION

(3) **Awaiting Decision:**

12/02194/EXT	Extension of time to implement planning permission 09/10382/FUL (Change of use of existing outbuilding to form one dwelling) at Stanney House, Shotwick-Frodsham Road, Little Stanney, Chester CH2 4HZ
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- (4) It had been reported to the Parish Council that a building, possibly a stable block, was being constructed at the rear of The Bungalow on the corner of Little Stanney Lane and Croughton Road. The Parish Council was not aware of planning permission having been granted for such a building and had referred the matter to the Planning Enforcement Team at CWaC for further investigation. A response was awaited.

12.70 HIGHWAY MATTERS AND AMENITY CLEANING

- (1) **Strawberry Drive Footpath:** Two objections had been made to the Order and CWaC were obliged to discuss the withdrawal of those objections. Discussions had ensued in an attempt to reach agreement so that the objections could be withdrawn, but to date this had been unsuccessful. The Order and supporting documents would now be sent to the Planning Inspectorate and they would decide whether the matter should be dealt with by way of local inquiry. This could take upwards of ten months.
- (2) **Traffic Light Junction Kinsey Road/A5117 at Cheshire Oaks:** The new traffic light junction at Kinsey Road/A5117 outside Sainsbury's had now been in operation for a few months and Councillors raised a number of issues.
- (a) There were two right turn lanes from Kinsey Road onto the A5117 which immediately became one lane once the right turn had been made. This inevitably led to a jostle for position which had implications for road safety, and also made it extremely difficult for traffic in the right turn lane on the A5117 waiting to make the turn into Little Stanney Lane. The Parish Council suggested that the two right turn lanes on Kinsey Road should be reduced to one, even though this might mean traffic would have to queue further back towards the roundabout.
- (b) The lighting at the junction was very poor and there were particularly dark areas in the centre of the carriageway. It appeared that the illumination from the lights did not reach the centre of the road.
- (c) The grassed layby outside School House, which had been intended as a loading/unloading bay was still being used as a car parking area.
- (3) **Drainage:** Two issues had arisen with regard to drainage. The first related to Stoak Village where it had been known for several years that the drains had partially collapsed although nothing had been done to rectify the situation. The recent heavy rainfall had highlighted the problem again. The situation had been exacerbated by the failure of the fat trap at the Bunbury Arms, allowing fat through into the main drainage system. The second was the ongoing issue of flooding on the A5117 opposite Casa Mia, which had been drawn to the attention of CWaC on a number of occasions, but had never been satisfactorily resolved. The Clerk was asked to report these two issues to CWaC.
- (4) **Street Naming:** Councillors Astbury and Thomas continued to be involved with Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) Team at CWaC over the naming/re-naming of streets in the local area. Despite 92% respondents being in favour of reverting to

Whitby Lane for the road from the Strawberry Roundabout to Backford, the LLPG Team were now checking this with the Land Registry as there had been two objections.

12.71 STOAK PLAYING FIELD AND NATURE PARK

The Clerk had reported the drug activity to the Police who had agreed to monitor the site. Councillor Jones reported that, as agreed at the last meeting, the hedge had now been cut back and the site was much more visible from the road. It had been suggested that a new access should be created to the site for the mower and hedge trimmer. A quotation had been received from Ringwood Fencing of £339.93 + VAT to supply and fit a metal gate. Councillor Jones would seek a second quotation and it was RESOLVED to accept the most competitive. It had initially been proposed that the access should be from Wervin Road, but an alternative suggestion of taking access from the Canal Bridge was favoured and this was agreed. It was not yet clear whether planning permission would be needed.

12.72 CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER COUNCIL

- (1) **Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC) Local Plan:** CWaC were preparing a new Local Plan for the Borough. This would set out how much, what type and where new developments should take place over 20 years and would tackle the need for new homes and jobs, the protection of the environment, support regeneration and bring about investment in new and improved infrastructure such as roads, schools and utilities. The Local Plan Preferred Policy Directions consultation was the next stage in the process and consultation on this would run for 10 weeks from 31 August to 12 November 2012. A copy of the document had been received and a summary had been included with the agenda. The Parish Council had been invited to attend a briefing event to be held on Thursday 4 October 2012 at 6.30m in St Mary's Centre, Chester. The CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) were urging residents to object to the proposals in relation to the Green Belt around Chester. This objection was also supported by Chester's MP, Stephen Mosley. The Parish Council RESOLVED that a small Working Group comprising the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Councillor Astbury, supported by the Parish Clerk, should formulate an appropriate response.
- (2) **Interim Housing Planning Policy Statement:** Formal adoption of CWaC's new Local Plan was expected in late 2014. The Parish Council noted that in the interim CWaC were looking at ways of ensuring a continuing supply of housing land across the Borough and intended to establish an Interim Housing Planning Policy Statement (IHPPS) to provide the basis for increasing the supply of new housing of the right type and in the right place. A consultation exercise was being held to establish the topics that would form the basis of the IHPPS. The outcome would be presented to the LDF Panel on 29 October 2012 and the Executive on 7 November 2012. The Executive would decide whether or not to implement the IHPPS. The closing date for comments was Friday 12 October 2012. A specific consultation had been launched on Topic 2 – Housing Land Supply Position - which also closed on 12 October 2012. .
- (3) **New Code of Conduct:** At the meeting on 1 May 2012 the Parish Council had adopted, sight unseen, CWaC's new Code of Conduct in order to meet the statutory deadline of 1 July 2012 imposed by the Government. CWaC had been unable to finalise their new Code until regulations were received from the Secretary of State prescribing the pecuniary interests which would need to be registered and disclosed. The Code had finally been adopted by CWaC on 26 July 2012 and the new Code, together with revised Register of Interests form and a Bulletin explaining how the Code should be applied, had been circulated to Councillors. The majority of the Register of Interests forms had now been completed and returned to the Clerk for submission to ChALC who would scan them onto CWaC's website. The Parish Council RESOLVED to formally adopt the new Code.
- (4) **Changes to Council Tax Support:** The Government was localising the national Council Tax Benefit scheme from 1 April 2013 and was asking councils to develop their own local scheme to help people on low incomes to pay their council tax. Government funding was being reduced by 10% from April 2013 and CWaC needed to decide on the new scheme by December 2012 to enable it to come into operation on 1 April 2013.

CWaC currently paid Council Tax Benefit to some 27,000 households. This number could be divided almost 50:50 between working age (18-65 generally) and non-working age residents (pensioners). The Government had said that pensioners would continue to qualify for support under the same rules as the current Council Tax Benefit scheme so any changes would only affect the benefit received by working age claimants. If no changes were made to the current system, the Council would need to increase everyone's council tax by around 1.7% (£25 per year/48p per week for a band D property) or make savings of £2.6m, which could affect other services. If it was decided to change the current system, working age people would on average get 20% less help than at present. The consultation would close on 4 November 2012. The Parish Council noted that copies of a questionnaire had been issued to all households.

- (5) **Have Your Say on the Council's budget:** The Parish Council noted that Local Councils and residents were being invited to 'have their say' on the Council's spending priorities. *YouChoose*, which was only available on line, allowed people to suggest how the authority might allocate its 2013/14 budget and to see how those choices would affect spending across all services. All the feedback received would be taken into account as part of the budget setting process. *YouChoose* could be accessed via www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/budgetconsultation. *YouChoose* would run until 30 September and further consultation would take place during the Autumn.

12.73 INCE MARSHES RESOURCE RECOVERY PARK

The Chairman reported that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 26 September when members would receive a presentation on landscaping of the site. At the last meeting it had been reported that some experimental work had been undertaken on gas extraction on the site and that this was not fracking. Since then it had been discovered that this might involve fracking.

12.74 OTHER CORRESPONDENCE/ISSUES

- (1) **ChALC Chester Branch Meeting:** The Annual General Meeting of the Chester Branch of the Cheshire Association of Local Councils had been held on Wednesday 19 September at 7.30pm in the HQ Building, Chester. Councillors Astbury and Thomas and the Clerk had attended and reported that Roger Parkin, Mickle Trafford & District Parish Council, had been elected Chairman for 2012/13, with Andrew Storrar, Saughall & Shotwick Park Parish Council, as Vice-Chairman. David Norbury remained as Hon Secretary. The meeting had received a presentation from Alison Armstrong on progress with the "Altogether Better" Community Empowerment and Delivery theme, touching on the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Planning. A presentation by Jo Lappin from the Altogether Better team looked at the Interim Housing Planning Policy Statement (IHPPS) Consultation topics and Parish Councils were urged to respond to the consultation to make their views known. It was agreed to reintroduce the quarterly meetings, the next meeting being scheduled for January 2013. Future speakers would be invited to discuss the Planning system, Highways and Transportation. CWaC would be asked to designate a Councillor to attend meetings, as they had in the past, and the Cheshire West representative on the Area Partnership Board would be asked to provide an update on issues dealt with by the Board. Training would be sought from CWaC/ChALC on declaring interests under the new Code of Conduct.

- (2) **Publications etc:** Receipt of the following publications was noted:

- (1) *Clerks and Councils Direct – September 2012*
- (2) *Cheshire Rural Touring Arts Autumn Season 2012 programme*
- (3) *Partnerships West – Edition 42 August 2012*
- (4) *The Playing Field Summer 2012*

12.75 FINANCE

- (1) **Half Yearly Budget Report:** Income and expenditure against budget at the half yearly stage was noted. The only cause for concern was the postage budget, due to the substantial increase in postal charges from April 2012.
- (2) **External Audit:** It was noted that the Parish Council had received a clean external audit report and that notices advertising residents' right to inspect a copy of the Annual Return had been placed on the Council's Notice Boards. It was also noted that the

appointment of BDO LLP, under the Audit Commission Act 1998, as the Council's external auditor to audit the annual return for five years from 2012/13 had been confirmed. The Parish Council's contact details would be passed to BDO LLP at the end of November.

(3) **Payments:**

S/O	Parish Clerk-salary September 2012	112.00
36	Audit Commission – External Audit Fee	144.00
37	Parish Clerk-expenses July-September 2012	48.75
38	G Povey (Amenity Cleaner)-wages and expenses September 2012	t.b.c.
39	HM Revenue & Customs – Income Tax July-September 2012	249.09
40	G Povey (Amenity Cleaner)-wages and expenses October 2012	t.b.c.

(4) **Receipts:** None

12.76 URGENT BUSINESS

None

12.77 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 27 November 2012 at 7.30pm