

Little Stanney & District Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 25 March 2014 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 and Peter Mountford, and Mrs Pauline English (Parish Clerk). Also in attendance was Lyam Beddows, PCSO for the Elton area. There were no members of the public present.

14.15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / RESIGNATION

Apologies were received from Councillors Martin Roberts (Health reasons) and Judith Thomas. A letter of resignation had been received from Councillor Ken Whitehouse to take effect immediately. The Clerk would draft the appropriate notices advertising the vacancy and would inform Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC)

14.16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mountford declared a personal interest in Minute 14.19 (14/01031/AGR) as he lived at the property. As the application had already been decided by Cheshire West and Chester Council, he remained in the meeting.

14.17 OPEN FORUM

The Chairman invited PCSO Beddows to update on any crime related issues in the parish. He reported that there had been an incident involving criminal damage on 12 March in Bunbury Close and a number of small thefts had taken place at the Caravan Park which had not been reported to the Police. A car window had been smashed on the Zoo car park. There had been no major traffic incidents. Councillor Jones reported problems with motorbikes on the canal towpath and on the Nature Park and asked for a more visible police presence in the Stoak area.

14.18 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 8 January 2014 be confirmed as a correct record.

14.19 PLANNING AND LICENSING

(1) Planning Applications Received:

14/00777/FUL	Replacement roof to outbuilding, including the raising of the roof, and installation of new openings at Plum Tree Cottage, Wervin Road, Wervin, Chester CH2 4BP - As the deadline for response was before the date of the next Parish Council meeting, in accordance with Minute 13.36(2) the Clerk had responded to this application and had raised no objections.
14/00675/FUL	Single storey front extension at 14A Stanney Lane, Little Stanney, Chester CH2 4HT – As the deadline for response was before the date of the next Parish Council meeting, in accordance with Minute 13.36(2) the Clerk had responded to this application and had expressed concerns about the proposed extension blocking light from Rose Cottage, the neighbouring property. The application was subsequently PERMITTED.
14/01031/AGR	Steel portal frame fodder and machinery store at Bridge Farm, Croughton Road, Croughton CH2 4DA – No objections raised and the application was subsequently PERMITTED
14/01034/FUL	First floor side extension with small two storey element to front at Ashwood Cottage, Picton Lane, Wervin, Chester – no objections

(2) Decisions: The following decisions were noted.

13/04923/FUL	Change of Use of agricultural buildings to 3 residential units with car port on land adjacent to Church Farm, Church Lane, Stoak, Chester CH2 4HP - PERMISSION
13/05178/FUL	Change of Use of outbuilding to form two dwellings with associated garages at Stanney House, Shotwick-Frodsham Road, Little Stanney, Chester CH2 4HZ – PERMISSION
13/03568/FUL	Proposed new access road from the A5117 to the British Pipeline Agency at Little Stanney Pump Station, Stanney Mill Lane, Chester, Cheshire -

- (3) **Cheshire West & Chester Draft Local Plan:** It was noted that Kevin Ward BA (HONS) MRTPI had been appointed to conduct the examination to determine whether the Local Plan was sound. A Pre-Hearings Meeting had been arranged for Friday 4 April 2014 in Chester Town Hall to discuss the management of the Hearings and various procedural and administrative matters. It would not involve any debate or consideration of the merits of the Plan or any of the representations that have been made. Parish Councils were invited to attend.

14.20 HIGHWAYS, RIGHTS OF WAY AND AMENITY CLEANING

- (1) **Street Naming:** Nothing to report.
- (2) **Flooding:** The problems opposite Casa Mia now appeared to have been resolved.
- (3) **Drainage in Stoak:** There were still issues on Croughton Road, Stoak where grass and weeds were growing from some of the grids. It was suggested that if the drains at the top of the road were cleaned out, the drains at the bottom of the road would not flood.
- (4) **Speed Limits:** The Clerk had received details of the recent speed monitoring exercise undertaken by CWaC on Whitby Lane and would pass these to Councillor Astbury.
- (5) **Waiting Restriction sign outside School House:** The TRO for the layby outside the School House had been drafted and would be advertised next week or the week after.
- (6) **White stakes outside Orion, Whitby Lane:** There was a new owner of the property and it was confirmed that the bollards were no longer required
- (7) **U-turns on Stanney Lane:** Bollards had been erected outside the Village Hall to stop U turns. Their effectiveness would be monitored.
- (8) **Signage on A5117:** CWaC had ordered a new sign for the A5117 to alert drivers to the fact that they could access the designer outlet etc if they stayed on the A5117 up to Longlooms Road. These signs had been delivered to the depot late the previous week and an order had been raised for their erection.
- (9) **Bridleway by Kinsey's Farm:** The access to the bridleway needed some kind of traffic calming. It was **resolved** to seek a meeting with the Greenspace Team. Councillor Jones would attend.
- (10) **Broadband Installation:** It was reported that BT had dug up bulbs from the verge at the bottom of Bunbury Close when installing the new broadband cabinet. It was resolved that they be asked to replace them.

14.21 PLAYING FIELD AND NATURE PARK

Picnic Bench: The new picnic bench had been ordered and would be delivered on 17 April 2014. The Clerk had informed Councillor Heatley, who had agreed to meet the net cost of the Bench from his Area budget.

14.22 CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER COUNCIL

- (1) **Future Arrangements for Town/Parish (Local) Council Elections:** Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC) had decided that it could no longer subsidise the full cost of Parish Council elections. With effect from 1 April 2014 local councils would be recharged some of the costs for holding combined elections. A fixed rate per elector was being proposed which meant that local councils would know in advance how much a combined election would cost and would be able to budget accordingly. An Uncontested Election would cost £165.00 (admin fee) plus Returning Officer fee based on the number of electors (£16 per 1000 electors or part). A Contested Election would cost 85p per elector with a minimum charge of £547.50 (£500 admin fee plus the Returning Officer fee of £47.50). The maximum amount recharged would be based on 2750 electors (£2337.50). As there was no scheduled local election in 2014, these charges would come into effect for the 2015 elections and would need to be taken into account when setting the budget for 2015-16. It was **resolved** to take this matter up with ChALC.

- (2) **CWaC Enforcement Policy Consultation:** CWaC was inviting views on proposed changes to the Council's Enforcement Policy to reflect current legislation, guidance and best practice. The Enforcement Policy set out the Council's general approach to enforcement and provided staff and contractors employed by the Council with a framework of general operating principles. The Council was keen to hear views on the overall policy and on the two key issues of Issuing Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) to juveniles as a means of dealing with low level offences such as dog fouling and littering, as an alternative to prosecution or simple caution and introducing targeted, non-uniformed enforcement operations in areas where dog fouling and littering had been reported by residents as problematic. As well as the online and paper version consultation, there will be a series of focus group sessions with younger people and community groups. All members of the public, Town and Parish Councils, and interested parties were invited to share their views, which will be considered prior to a final decision being made in June 2014. The deadline for online questionnaires was 30 March 2014 and for postal questionnaires was 4 April 2014. It was agreed that anyone who wished to respond should do so individually.
- (3) **Local Councils' Assembly:** The annual Local Councils' Assembly was to be held on the evening of Wednesday 26 March 2014 at Chester Town Hall. The evening would begin at 6.00pm with light refreshments (tea, coffee, sandwiches) and an opportunity for networking with other Local Council representatives, CWaC Members and officers and some partner organisations. The programme for the evening would focus on the Council's *Blueprint for Change*, *the review of the Local Councils Charter*, and other current items of interest including New Homes Bonus and Locality Working. Parish Councils were invited to nominate three representatives to attend the Assembly. It was **resolved** that Councillors Astbury and Greenwood and the Parish Clerk should attend.
- (4) **Launch of new Locality Website:** It was noted that a new locality website was to be launched by CWaC in April. The site replaced Talking West Cheshire and had four separate sections– Your Chester, Your Ellesmere Port, Your Northwich and Winsford, and Your Rural Life. Each section contained information and opportunities about localities and was a central point for the latest job opportunities from local public sector partners – the Council, Cheshire Police, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service and the Police & Crime Commissioner for Cheshire. Visitors to the site could sign up to receive updates relevant to their area by phone, text or email through the new Neighbourhood Alert system.
- (5) **Community Governance Review:** It was noted that the draft recommendations for Backford, Caughall and Chorlton-by-Backford Parish Council had been published and were to be considered by the Community Governance Review Committee on 25 March 2014. One of the recommendations was that Woodcroft, Strawberry Farm, Strawberry Mead and Trade Winds be transferred from Chorlton-by-Backford parish to Little Stanney parish; which was the recommendation made by Little Stanney & District Parish Council.

14.23 THE LEGISLATIVE REFORM (PAYMENTS BY PARISH COUNCILS, COMMUNITY COUNCILS AND CHARTER TRUSTEES) ORDER 2014

The Order removed the statutory requirement in Section 150(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 that cheques and payment orders must be signed by two members of the parish council. Further information and advice on the implementation of the Order was awaited.

14.24 CONSULTATION ON A DRAFT TRANSPARENCY CODE FOR PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS WITH A TURNOVER NOT EXCEEDING £25,000

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 set out a new audit framework for local public authorities which were currently covered by the Audit Commission regime. Under the new framework local councils with an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000 would be exempt from routine external audit and would be subject to the new transparency requirements laid out in the draft Code. The consultation asked questions on the content and application of a draft audit-substitute transparency code which would be mandatory for local councils, but would not apply to parish meetings. DCLG was also asking for an estimate of staff time and

resources to meet the obligations of the proposed code. Responses were requested by 22 April 2014.

14.25 HIGH SPEED BROADBAND

A copy of the latest Connecting Cheshire Project Update is attached. Councillor Glazzard reported that the green cabinet at the bottom of Bunbury Close had now been linked to the Mickle Trafford exchange and it was intended that it should go live in June. This would improve speeds substantially.

14.26 INCE PARK COMMUNITY FORUM

At the last meeting of the Forum in January 2014 it was reported that a Scoping Report for the revised Phase 1 of the scheme should be submitted shortly and the full planning application would be submitted approximately five weeks after that. Phase 1 would include the Environmental Mitigation Scheme, plots 2/3/4 and the biomass plant. The planned scheme would have improvements to Grinsome Road but at this stage no berth or rail link. A revised marketing website and campaign would be launched, concentrating on energy related facilities. The port and rail facilities might eventually come in under Phase 1 but that would depend on the demand from potential tenants of the Park. A dialogue was currently being held with potential operators of the biomass plant, which was small enough to be able to run on wood sourced from waste wood sources. Discussions were being held with parties to replace Covanta. The next meeting would be held in April 2014.

14.27 PUBLICATIONS

Publications received to date are:

- (1) *ChALC News – January 2014 – copy circulated to all Councillors*
- (2) *CWaC Bulletin for Local Councils – March 2014*

14.28 FINANCE

(1) **Village Hall Hire Rate:** The Parish Council had been informed that from April 2014 the hourly rate for hiring the Village Hall would be increased to £12 (previously £10). As the Parish Council had increased its monthly meetings from six to 12, and given that each meeting usually lasted for two hours, this would potentially increase the cost to the Parish Council from £120 a year to £288 a year. The Village Hall Committee had been asked whether an annual fee could be agreed, as meetings were likely to be shorter under the new arrangements and might not be required at all in some months. A fee of £200 had been suggested and would be considered by the Village Hall Committee at its meeting in April 2014.

(2) **Membership of the Mid-Cheshire Footpath Society:** It was resolved that the Parish Council should not take up membership of the Society for 2014-15.

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

Cheque No		Amount
94	G Povey (Amenity Cleaner)-expenses March 2014	28.31
S/O	Parish Clerk-salary March 2014	118.72
S/O	G Povey (Amenity Cleaner)-wages March 2014	242.67
95	HM Revenue & Customs – Income Tax January-March 2014	271.10
96	Parish Clerk-expenses January-March 2014	32.40

(4) **Receipts:** The following receipts were noted:

Bank interest (31 March 2014)	1.22
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14.29 URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business brought forward under Standing Order 1(18).

14.30 NEXT MEETING

Annual Parish Meeting - Tuesday 22 April 2014 at 7.30pm at Little Stanney Village Hall to be followed by ordinary meeting of the Council at 8.00pm or on the conclusion of the Annual Parish Meeting, whichever was the later.