

Guilden Sutton Parish Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Council held on Monday 12 January, 2004 in Guilden Sutton Village Hall.

Chairman: Councillor D Fisher.

Present: Councillors Fisher, Hughes, Paterson, Proudlove, Young.

In attendance: Peter Lewis Esq, Rights of Way Officer, Cheshire County Council Public Rights of Way Unit, County Councillor J E Burke.

Public Speaking Time: The Chairman welcome to the meeting a number of members of the public attending in connection with the proposal by Cheshire County Council to upgrade the status of public footpath Guilden Sutton No. 7 to a byway open to all traffic on the basis of historical evidence. The Chairman indicated the parish council did not favour any change in the status of the path which in recent years had been developed and improved by the Parish Paths Group. Mr Peter Lewis, Rights of Way Officer, Cheshire County Council referred to the basis of the proposal and responded to questions from members of the public. At the conclusion of Public Speaking Time, Mr. Lewis was thanked by both the Chairman on behalf of the Council and by the public for responding to questions.

1 Apologies: Councillors Armitage, Astbury, Bayton, City Councillor J R Boughton, PC R Boulton.

2 Procedural matters.

(i) Declarations of interest. Members were reminded that they should declare any personal interest which they had in any matter or item to be considered at the meeting. Any declaration must be made before the matter, or item, was considered or as soon as the Member became aware a declaration was required. Similarly, if the interest was also a prejudicial one, this must be declared and the Member must leave the room and not seek to influence any decision made. Declarations were a personal matter for each Member to decide. The decision to declare, or not, was the responsibility of the Member based on the particular circumstances.

(ii) Confirmation of the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Council held on Monday 15 December, 2003.

The minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Council held on Monday 15 December 2003 were proposed by Councillor Hughes, seconded by Councillor Paterson and agreed.

(iii) Action list. The action list had been circulated by the Clerk.

(vi) Presentation of minutes. Alternative options for the presentation of the minutes so as to highlight action items had been prepared by the Clerk. These were considered by Members who expressed a preference for action items and their ownership to appear within the text in a highlighted form.

The Clerk.

(v) Presentation of training certificate to Cllr Young. The Chairman presented Cllr Young with a certificate issued by the Cheshire Training Partnership and congratulated her on her achievement.

3 Planning:

(i) New applications:

03/02072/FUL garage conversion to living space and the installation of three rear elevation rooflights for loft conversion at 1 The Stables, Station Lane CH3 7SY for Mr B O'Neill. **Councillors Hughes, Bayton.** The Clerk reported the receipt, by letter dated 22 December 2003, of advice from the case officer that the application file was being closed as the proposed external alterations were classed as permitted development and did not require a formal planning application. This was noted.

03/02098/FUL first floor side extension and conversion of flat roof to pitched roof at rear, 95 Oaklands, CH3 7HG for Mr A Mark. Further inquiries had been made by Cllrs Paterson and Hughes who reported. **Local planning authority to be informed the Council had no observations.**

(ii) Decision notices:

03/01855/FUL dwelling house at The Cottage, Church Lane, CH3 7EW for Mr G Bell. Refusal of planning permission (Green Belt, cramped and intrusive development.)

(iii) General. Councillor Hughes intimated the concerns he had raised at the previous meeting related to a disappointing lack of detail in the decision letter sent to objectors rather than in the decision notices provided to the Council. The Clerk thanked Cllr Hughes for his clarification. **Clerk to seek response from the local planning authority .**

4 Parish car park. There were no action items to report.

5 Leisure Services.

(i) Playing Field. (a) provision of stile. Further to the letter dated 6 October, 2003, from Mr and Mrs J Dale, which sought the provision of a stile as a safety measure to protect children leaving the playing field and to make it impossible

for those wishing to ride motorcycles on the field to do so, a reply had been sent referring to the lack of any previous similar incidents, the reinstatement of the 'slow' marking at the approach to the playing field and the lack of problems arising from the use of the field by motorcycles, particularly in view of recent police action. (b) repairs to playing surface. It was not known if the repairs had been carried out by the grounds maintenance contractor. (c) scavenge. The grounds maintenance contractor had been thanked for the additional scavenge carried out at no cost following half term. (d) provision of litter bin. The Clerk had furnished Councillor Paterson with a catalogue of possible receptacles. Councillor Hughes would be informed of the likely cost.
To be progressed by Cllr Paterson.

(ii) Play Area. (a) improvement scheme. Further to the agreement that the Council would proceed with the first phase of the proposed improvement scheme, at this stage to provide replacement equipment for the pre-school age group, at a cost not exceeding £3,000 to include the donation of £350, previously earmarked for an additional public seat, made to the Council by the Millennium Group, Cllr Proudlove reported further that it would be possible for installation to proceed by Sunday 29 February. It was proposed by Cllr Paterson, seconded by Cllr Hughes and agreed that this course of action should be followed. Cllr Proudlove was thanked by the Council for her considerable efforts. It was further agreed that a costed phase two would be developed. **Cllr Proudlove to proceed with phase one, costed options for phase two to be developed.** (b) damage to slide: The Clerk reported the receipt of advice from the Council's insurers, by letter dated 29 December 2003, that the replacement of the damaged slide had been agreed on the basis of an estimate for a non OEM plastic slide provided by Maple Leaf Designs of £2,310 including installation. (c) CCTV. The Clerk was progressing the helpful response which had been received from the City Council as to appropriate signage. (d) training session, Saturday 17 January, 2004. The Clerk confirmed he had informed Christleton Parish Council the training session would be attended by two Members from Guilden Sutton Parish Council. (e) annual inspection, Chester City Council. The Clerk would report further to the February meeting. (f) relocation of seat. It was agreed the proposed Agreement with Chester City Council for the relocation of the seat within the play area to the opposite verge should be signed on the basis of the Parish Council accepting liability for the future maintenance of the seat and for a suitable hardstanding being provided. The preferred location had been marked on a plan by Cllr Proudlove and would be returned to the City Council. **Clerk to progress with City Council.**

(iii) Public Footpaths (a) Rights of Way Improvement Plan: The matter was being progressed by the Parish Paths Warden. (b) Status of Footpath no 7. The Council considered further the inquiries being made by the Public Rights of Way Unit into the status of this path and the constraints surrounding any decision which might be made about its future. It was noted there had been no support for the proposal among members of the public attending Public Speaking Time. Mr Lewis indicated the

recommendation was be considered by the County Council's Rights of Way Committee on Monday 26 January 2004 on the basis of the historical evidence which had been adduced. He confirmed that ownership of the lane lay with the highway authority. Cllr Hughes emphasised the Parish Paths Group had invested 10 years of effort into improving the footpath. Mr Lewis suggested a byway was most likely to be used by horses and walkers. He referred to legislation which provided for Rights of Way to be extinguished or downgraded and to the use of traffic regulation orders to prevent their use by vehicular traffic. Cllr Hughes insisted the status quo should be preserved. Cllr Young suggested a byway open to all traffic would not be safe for all user groups and asked as to future maintenance costs. It was proposed by Cllr Hughes, seconded by Cllr Proudlove and agreed that the Council should seek to retain the status quo. County Cllr Burke said he would pursue the possibility of vehicular rights being extinguished with the County Solicitor. This was welcomed. (c) fencing the hollows: **Clerk, Parish Paths Warden.** The Clerk was progressing the matter with the Parish Paths Warden. (d) Parish Paths Group. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

(iv) Grounds Maintenance. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

(v) Public Seats. There was nothing further to add to the action minuted above.

(vi) Landscaping, Fox Cover. The advice of the City Council parks and open spaces manager had been sought as to the preparation of the ground before any planting. **Councillor Armitage to arrange collection of suitable shrubs.**

(vii) Provision for youth. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

6 Public transport. (i) provision of seats in shelters: The Clerk reported he had deferred making a formal request for a licence from the highway authority to enable the provision of freestanding benching as Deva Forge had responded positively to a suggestion that it might be possible to affix seating to the structure of the shelters which he has been advised would not require a licence. **Clerk to contact Deva Forge to arrange a site meeting.** (ii) proposed subsidised bus service reductions. There was no further information at present as to the previous understanding that an alternative parent funded service was under discussion with respect to the service to Christleton County High School. (iii) bus services, general. The use of double-deck buses on services routed through Oaklands was to be raised at a forthcoming meeting of the Chester District Public Transport Liaison Committee. **Matter to be raised by Councillor Armitage.**

7 Highways:

(i) Major schemes. There were no action items to report.

(a) cycleway. Further to the inquiries being made by the County Council's Public Rights of Way Unit into the status of Guilden Sutton public footpath No. 7, it was proposed by Cllr Hughes and agreed that the County Cycling Officer should be asked to detail any proposals which were at present under consideration for cycle routes which would affect the parish. **Clerk to contact County Cycling Officer**

(ii) local matters:

(a) Local safety scheme, junction A 41/Guilden Sutton Lane. It was noted there was a continuing incidence of two vehicles entering the gap in the central reservation. **The situation would continue to be monitored.** (b) Request for pedestrian crossing Hoole Lane/Guilden Sutton Lane. There was nothing further to report at this stage. (c) Road markings, approach to parish playing field. The District Maintenance Engineer had been thanked for the reinstatement of these markings. (d) Station Lane 'slow' markings. It was not known if the remaining 'slow' marking had been reinstated. (e) speed of traffic Wicker Lane. The Clerk was seeking confirmation of his understanding that the request for a 30 mph limit on the entire length of the road had been referred to the speed review panel. (f) equestrian warning signs. Councillor Proudlove confirmed these were expected to be affixed in February on Belle Vue Lane and Wicker Lane. (g) speed of traffic Guilden Sutton Lane, use of speed trailer, week commencing 19 January 2004. The Clerk reported the Council had been offered the speed trailer for this period. It was agreed a rota should be drawn up to cover the morning and afternoon school traffic.

Members to indicate to the Clerk their availability. (h) footway Wicker Lane. There was nothing further to report at this stage as to the request for the condition of the footway in the vicinity of the Methodist Church to be inspected. (i) parking, Cathcart Green. Further enquiries would be made by the Clerk as to the status of the request to the highway authority and to the police traffic management for difficulties caused by parking at this location to be further considered. (j) traffic calming, School Lane. The request which had been made for traffic calming to be installed on School Lane had been forwarded to the highway authority. A response was awaited. (k) Moorcroft Crescent. The City Council had been requested to sweep this road.

(iii) strategic: There were no action items to report.

(iv) Lighting. (i) faults. No further faults were reported.

8 Finance

(i) Income:

Bank of Scotland:		
Interest (Dec)	£	16.90

(ii) Payments

Councillor Paterson		
Christmas lights voucher	£	10.00

Clerk		
Salary		
Oct 1 - Dec 31, 2003	£	700.00

(iii) Balances:		
(Dec)	£	16,470.22

Proposed by Councillor Hughes
 Seconded by Councillor Paterson
 and agreed.

(iv) Budget 2004/05. A proposed budget for 2004/05 had been considered in detail by the Chairman and Vice Chairman (Cllrs Fisher and Hughes.) The Chairman believed it was important to move to a balanced budget in view of possible future capital commitments although it was recognised this would lead to a 10% increase in precept for 2004/05. The Vice Chairman said he did not disagree with the principle of moving towards a higher precept but believe 10% was a significant increase. Members referred to the likely cost of phase two of the proposed improvements to the children's play area and how this might be financed. Cllr Young and Cllr Proudlove would support all or a significant proportion of the cost being included in the precept. It was pointed out, however, that any significant increase in the budget would normally be subject to prior discussion at the annual parish meeting. It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by the Vice Chairman and agreed on a 5 - 0 vote that a proposed budget of £11,388 should be accepted with a matching precept.

(v) external audit. The annual return and supporting documents had been submitted to the external auditor.

9 Environment services: (i) amenity cleansing. There were no action items to report. (ii) dog fouling. There were no action items to report. (iii) litter bins. There were no action items to report. (iv) lengthsman. There were no action items to report.

10 Trees and hedges: (i) hedge Cinder Lane. There was nothing further to report at this stage. (ii) hedge Guilden Sutton Lane. An approach had been made to Mickle Trafford and District Parish Council to progress the matter.

(v) overhanging shrub, Oaklands. An appropriate letter had been sent to the occupier of a property on Oaklands where an overhanging shrub was obstructing the footway.

11 Cheshire Association of Parish Councils/NALC. (i) Chester Area Meeting Wednesday 7 January 2003. It was noted the meeting would include a presentation on the local government review by Cheshire County Council. (ii) The Clerk reported a presentation organised by the Association would take place on Thursday 5 February, 2004, from 7.00pm - 9.00pm at Brookfield Hall, Shrewbridge Road, Nantwich.

12 Chester City Council (a) Review of financial arrangements with Parish Councils. The City Council review of its financial arrangements with parish councils, including double taxation, was being considered by Cllr Armitage. It was noted a response was required by 26 January, 2004 (b) maintenance of churchyards and burial grounds. The Clerk was progressing possible claims in 2003/04 and 2004/05. (c) Goway North Area Committee. It was noted the next meeting of the area committee would be held on Thursday 15 January 2004.

13 Cheshire County Council. There were no action items to report.

14 Cheshire Community Council. There were no action items to report.

15 CPRE. There were no action items to report.

16 Health. There were no action items to report

17 Policing. There were no action items to report.

18 Newsletter. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

19 Memorial garden. (a) finger post. Deva Forge had been contacted by the Clerk as to the reinstatement of the missing direction sign. (b) hedging. Cllr Armitage was to request suitable shrubs for planting within the memorial garden. **Cllr Armitage.**

20 Bulb planting. Mr Gresty had been thanked for kindly donating the additional sack of bulbs planted on the Guilden Sutton Lane diversion.

21 Parish ICT. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

22 Primary School. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

23 Parliamentary boundary proposals. The outcome of the inquiry which had taken place on Tuesday 11 November, 2003 at County Hall into the proposal that Christleton ward should be transferred to the Eddisbury

parliamentary constituency was awaited.

24 Post Office closure proposals, Green Lane. The Council had been informed by letter dated 16 December 2003 that the Green Lane branch would close on January 21, 2004. This was noted with regret.

25 Christmas lights competition. Christmas lights had been judged in the week before Christmas and a £10 voucher had been awarded to the winning house.

26 Parish noticeboards. The Clerk had obtained an estimate for the replacement of the Guilden Sutton Lane noticeboard. A quotation for repairs was also being sought by Cllr Hughes from the grounds maintenance contractor.

27 Post Collections. Royal Mail had been thanked for the introduction of the later collection time at the sub-post office.

28 Members' information items.

There were no information items to report.

29 Information Correspondence.

CATPCs: Local Council Review, January 2004, Meeting re local government review, Thursday 5 February, 2004, 7.00pm - 9.00pm, Brookfield Hall, Shrewbridge Road, Nantwich.

Chester City Council: Goway North Area Committee Tuesday 15 January 2004.

Cheshire County Council:

Chester County Forum 15 December 2003, 20 January 2004. **Councillor Armitage**

Step back into Cheshire, 18 - 19 September 2004

Annual Town and Parish Councils conference 21 January 2004.

Cheshire County Council: development control charter.

Cheshire Community Council:

Rural Opportunities Fund

Community Pride Competition 2004

Policing: Project Rural Matters Newsletter No. 1, Project Rural Matters open day Tuesday 27 January 2004, 3.00pm to 6.00pm, Chester Town Hall, Chester Police Forum dates 2004/ 05.

CPRE: Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill.

Boundary Commission: local government review, response required by 23 February 2004.

Clerks and Councils Direct January 2004, Suppliers Guide and Year Book 2004/05.

Part Two

Matters considered in the absence of the Press and Public.

There were no Part Two items.