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## Parish Council Minutes

Guilden Sutton Parish Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Council held on  
Monday 18 June 2007 in Guilden Sutton Village Hall.

Chairman: Cllr R J K Bayton

Present: Cllrs Bayton, Brown, Fisher, Moulton, Paterson

In attendance: Mark Pembleton Esq., Cheshire County Council, Syd Jones Esq., Chester City Council

Public Speaking Time

There was no public speaking

Presentations

The Council received a presentation from Mark Pembleton Esq., Cheshire County Council on the County Council's proposal for one unitary council covering the whole of the present County Council area, submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government as part of the local government review. Mr Pembleton responded to Members' questions and was thanked by the Chairman for his attendance

The Council received a presentation from Syd Jones Esq., Chester City Council on the City Council's proposal for two unitary councils, each covering part of the present County Council area, submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government as part of the local government review. Chester district would be included in a new City of Chester and West Cheshire council covering Chester, Ellesmere Port and Neston and Vale Royal. Mr Jones responded to Members' questions and was thanked by the Chairman for his attendance

1 Apologies. Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs R M Armitage, D Hughes and M S J Roberts

Apologies were received from PC M Baker, City Cllrs B J Bailey and S Parker and County Cllr J E Burke

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

Planning application 07/00509/FUL, 2 no garages, land between Summerfield House and 4 Summerfield Road for Mr C Houlbrook. Cllr P M Paterson declared a prejudicial interest being an office holder in the Guiden Sutton Community Association which occupied adjoining land.

Finance: payments. Cllr Fisher declared a prejudicial interest in the payment to him of £116.12 in respect of a replacement tyre following accidental damage incurred on official business.

(ii) Confirmation of the minutes of the annual meeting of the Council held on Monday 14 May 2007 in Guiden Sutton Village Hall. The minutes of the annual meeting of the Council held on Monday 14 May 2007 in Guiden Sutton Village Hall were proposed by Cllr Paterson, seconded by Cllr Bayton and agreed.

(iii) Dates of future meetings.

As at present: 23 July, 3 September, 1 October, 12 November and 17 December 2007. Possible alternative dates of 8 October and 19 November were being considered.

(iv) Quality Council matters. The Chairman indicated his wish to visit the possibility of the Council proceeding to Quality Parish Council status. It was agreed a preliminary discussion should be held in the near future with the Regional Development Officer from the County Association. Action: The Clerk.

(v) New model code of conduct for local authority members. Members noted the new code of conduct had come into force on 3 May 2007. Parish Councils had until 1 October 2007 to adopt the revised code. The existing code would continue in force until such time as the Council adopted the new one or until 1 October 2007 whichever was the sooner. The Clerk reported the receipt, by letter dated 1 June, 2007, of two publications from the Standards Board for England, the first being a guide for Members on the code of conduct and the second being a pocket guide, both of which he had circulated. The Clerk further reported the receipt, by letter dated 14 June, 2007, of correspondence from Chester City Council setting out the process the Council should now follow. The Clerk would report further at the July meeting.

(vi) Allowances. It was agreed the document previously circulated by Cllr Armitage, the issue having been raised by Cllr Fisher particularly to encourage younger councillors, should be revisited at the July meeting.

### 3 Planning.

#### (i) New applications

##### Telecommunications issues:

05/00107/FUL 37.5m high lattice mast on land at Tile Farm, Wicker Lane for T Mobile. In the absence of City Cllr Bailey, there was nothing further to report at this stage.

##### Householder issues:

07/00029/FUL bedroom extension at 14 Old Hall Park CH3 7ER. There was nothing further to report with respect to the correspondence per Dr and Mrs J E Cantele.

07/00241/REM detached dwelling, The Vicarage, Wicker Lane CH3 7EL for the Chester

Diocesan Board of Finance. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

07/00561/TPO proposed works to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order. One Sycamore crown raise or remove, one Cedar remove one stem and crown raise, one Cherry crown, clean and raise at Cedar Lodge, School Lane for Mr B Harding. The decision notice was awaited.

07/00784/FUL two storey extension and conservatory at rear, relocation and rebuilding of garage at Wicker House, Wicker Lane CH3 7EL for Mr and Mrs G P Hughes. Further inquiries had been made by Cllr Paterson and the Clerk. It was noted the proposed two storey extension at the rear of the dwelling, which had previously been extended, included a two and a half storey gable. The existing garage outbuildings would be demolished and replaced by a new building at the extent of the residential curtilage which would include first floor accommodation. It was proposed by Cllr Paterson, seconded by Cllr Fisher and agreed that an objection should be raised on the basis that, in the absence of any accompanying very special circumstances, the proposal, taken with previously approved extensions, would be inappropriate development which would be harmful to the Green Belt. There was particular concern at the impact of the 2 1/2 storey extension (referred to as two storey in the description) and of the new building which was proposed which resulted in a greater intrusion of built development into the Green Belt.

07/00897/FUL side extension and conservatory at 14 Old Hall Park, CH3 7ER for Mr and Mrs G Parry. The Clerk reported that inquiries had been made by Cllr Hughes who had recommended that no objection should be raised.

(ii) Decision notices.

07/00496/FUL replacement dwelling at Westview, Hare Lane CH3 7ED for Mr and Mrs P D Collinson. Planning permission. Tree protection scheme to be agreed prior to any work commencing. Permission does not grant any consent for alterations or extensions to the existing garage. 07/08 021

07/00509/FUL 2 no garages, land between Summerfield House at 4 Summerfield Road, Guiden Sutton for Mr C Houlbrook. Refusal of planning permission. Due to their location within the site, the garages would have a significantly detrimental effect on the amenities of people living nearby. Overbearing impact on the primary accommodation of residents living at ground floor level of Summerfield House due to the location of the garages along the boundary. . In the absence of City Cllr Bailey, it was not known what progress he had made with his inquiry investigation as to whether planning guidance had changed since the original application.

07/00525/FUL single storey extension, removal of porch and bay window, pitched roof to replace flat roof and conversion of roof space including front dormer at 5 School Lane CH3 7ET for Mr D Everton CH3 7ET. Planning permission. Revised decision notice. Informative that work should stop immediately if any protected species are found such as bats and Natural England informed.

(iii) Parish Plan. Cllr Paterson reported. Questionnaires were to be circulated.

(iv) Village Design Statement. The Clerk had provided Cllr Fisher with recent village design statements for Kelsall and Tarvin and a copy of the original 1969 design statement for Guiden Sutton. A request by Cllr Fisher as to the availability of copies of a large scale map of the village for research purposes would be progressed by the Clerk. Action: The Clerk.

4 Parish car park. The condition of the parish car park continued to be monitored.

5 Leisure Services.

(i) Playing Field:

(a) grounds maintenance issues (b) mole infestation (c) nets. With respect to item (c) it was noted further work was required to satisfactorily fix the nets to the posts. Action: Cllr Hughes.

(ii) Play Area

(a) CCTV and CCTV protocol. It was hoped it would be possible for the issue of CCTV equipment suppliers to be raised at a meeting of the Gowy North Area Committee. Action was awaited by Messrs Barlows who had been informed that the infra red sensor on the camera at the rear of the Village Hall appeared to be loose.

(b) inspections including condition of safety surfacing/operation of gate. (i) Fouling. The Clerk had been advised of the receipt by Chester City Council of a complaint relating to dog fouling on the junior slide. The City Council had helpfully arranged for the slide to be jet washed by Graffiti Busters and the Clerk would take steps to close the play area in the meantime. (ii) The condition of the see saw handles would continue to be monitored. Cllr Fisher had refitted the steering wheel which had become detached from the toddler's equipment although this had again been removed. Further inquiries would be made by Cllr Paterson. Action: Cllr Paterson. It was noted the contractors had been requested to make an inspection following the original refitting by Cllr Fisher. (iii) The Clerk was revising the inspection rota for 2007 to take account of the outcome of the May elections. Action: The Clerk. (iv) Annual independent inspection. The Clerk reported the receipt, by letter dated 17 May, 2007, of advice from the City Council that the annual independent playground inspection would take place between 9 and 13 July 2007.

(c) Grounds maintenance issues. The proposed variation to the specification for grounds maintenance within the play area to include the removal of accumulations of leaves and hedge cuttings would be raised with the appointed contractor.

(d) Chester City Council contributions to play areas in parished areas 2007. It was noted that any application to Chester City Council for funding towards improving existing play facilities or developing new ones in parished areas was due by 2 July 2007.

(iii) Public Footpaths. (a) Footpath 7. There was nothing further to report at this stage. (b) Kissing gate project. The Clerk had informed the Parish Paths Warden of the advice from the Countryside Access Manager as to the availability of kissing gates to replace stiles on paths to increase accessibility.

(c) Footpath no 3. The route had been inspected by the Parish Paths Warden who had advised the Clerk it had been found to be in a good condition.

(iv) Grounds Maintenance.

(a) Vale. It was noted that the frequency of cuts in the dell and the Fox Cover amenity area continued to be inadequate. The issue would be raised by City Cllr Bailey. (b) Parish Council contract 2007/08. Cllr Hughes and the Clerk should continue to seek site meetings with Messrs Gresty to monitor progress.

(v) Public Seats. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

(vi) Landscaping, Fox Cover. It was agreed a working party would be formed to undertake maintenance on Saturday 30 June at 10.30am. The Clerk would inquire as to the disposal of any arisings by the City Council should this be necessary.

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

6 Public transport. The Clerk updated the Council on the proposed sale of ChesterBus. He understood the company was to be sold to the First Group and that commercial C35 services serving the parish would be retained.

7 Highways.

(i) Strategic. There were no action items to report.

(ii) Local matters.

(a) Speed indicator device. Members reported on the use of the speed indicator device. The relevant data had been received from the City Council and circulated by the Clerk. The Clerk would inquire as to the availability of the equipment on the next requested date of week commencing Monday 9 July 2007.

(b) Radar gun. The Clerk reported the Council had been offered the use of the radar equipment, with training but unfortunately few Members had been available on the date suggested. The matter would be revisited. The Project Rural Matters Co-ordinator, Mr D Bowker, would be approached as to progress with the understood intention that the equipment should be operated on a pool basis.

(c) Signing and lining schemes. (i) Wicker Lane/Station Lane. The location of a sign in Station Lane, which Members believed could be 10m to 15m closer to Guilden Sutton, was being raised with the highway authority. There was nothing further to report at this stage as to progress with the lining proposals which had been deferred to 2007/08. (ii) Gateway treatment, Guilden Sutton Lane - red patch SLOW marking, high visibility 30mph signs. There was nothing further to report at this stage as to progress with the lining proposals which had been deferred to 2007/08.

(d) Speed review, Guilden Sutton Lane. There was nothing further to report at this stage as to the decision by the highways and transportation local joint committee for Chester to carry out a speed review of Guilden Sutton Lane. The highway authority was being informed of the Council's view the limit on the CDS length of Guilden Sutton Lane from Willow Cottage to the highways depot should be reduced to 30mph. Action: The Clerk.

(e) junction A41/Guilden Sutton Lane. There was nothing further to report at this stage as to the Clerk's approach to the highways and transportation local joint committee with respect to the need for a 50mph limit on the A41 at this junction to reduce hazards faced by vehicles emerging from the gap in the central reservation, the provision of traffic signals to deal with the problem of more than one vehicle waiting in the gap in the central reservation and associated road rage and for street lighting between the junction and the Hoole roundabout. The Clerk was advising City Cllr B J Bailey of the representations which had been made. Action: The Clerk

(f) speed restriction sign, Station Lane. The matter was being reported to the Area Maintenance Engineer. Action: The Clerk.

(g) Hare Lane. (a) RTA, Hare Lane/Belle Vue Lane. Cllr Paterson reported that inquiries had been made by PC Baker following the RTA at the junction of Hare Lane and Belle Vue Lane in which a young cyclist had been injured. (b) traffic. The concerns as to the speed of traffic on Hare Lane and at double parking in the vicinity of the rugby club when training took place had been raised with the highway authority and with PC Baker. A response was awaited.

(h) footway rear Cathcart Green/Summerfield Road. A site inspection had been sought with the Area Maintenance Engineer with a view to the defect being repaired and the path being adopted if not adopted.

(i) routing of HGVs. Routing of HGVs. Further to the reported use of Belle Vue Lane by an HGV, possibly as a result of the use of satellite navigation, Cllr Fisher had approached the site manager at McKenzie King/Topaz who had kindly offered to advise transport managers. Cllr Fisher was thanked for his good offices.

(j) Hill Top Road name plate. The damaged condition of a nameplate at the junction of Hill Top Road and Arrowcroft Road would be reported by the Clerk. Action: The Clerk.

(iii) Lighting. A fault affecting a light on Belle Vue Lane would be reported by the Clerk. Faults affecting lights on Guilden Sutton Lane had been reported by Cllr Moulton.

#### 8 Finance:

(Cllr Fisher left the room during consideration of the payment to him of £116.12)

#### (i) Income:

##### Bank of Scotland:

Interest 30 April 2007	£ 11.94
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#### (ii) Payments

##### Chester City Council

2nd half year rates	£ 283.00
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D Fisher replacement tyre	£ 116.12
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Mrs R Mort playing field rent July - September 2007	£ 137.50
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##### Clerk

##### Expenses:

Stationery	£ 0.74
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Noticeboard pad lock	£ 0.97
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##### Expenses:

Photocopies 171 @ 5p	<u>£ 8.55</u>
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£ 10.26

Proposed by Cllr Paterson, Seconded by Cllr Brown and agreed.

#### (iii) Balances

##### Bank of Scotland

24 May 2007	£11,622.03
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Co-op	£ 1,490.00
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##### Scottish Widows no 1 account

2 April 2007	£18,155.24
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##### Scottish Widows no 2

2 April 2007

£ 2,247.59

(iv) Report on contingency payments.

Budget: £1,465

Payments: £ NIL

(v) Insurance. The application form obtained from the insurers with respect to the proposed increase in the fidelity limit would be completed. Further consideration would be given to a number of individual elements within the insurance, including the recently received renewal, initially by Cllr Hughes and the Clerk. Action: Cllr Hughes, The Clerk.

(vi) Banking facilities. Transfer of current account. The Clerk reported the new account was now operational. The Bank of Scotland account would close on 28 June 2007.

(vii) Audit. The Clerk reported UHY Hacker Young had kindly agreed that the annual return for the year ended 31 March 2007 could be agreed at the July meeting and delivered to UHY Hacker Young by the end of that week. There had been no response to the further advice as to the internal audit which had been forwarded for consideration to D Tubman Esq. and Cllr Hughes. The internal audit was in course of preparation.

9 Environment services: (i) recycling issues. There was nothing further to report at this stage in the absence of Cllr Roberts, Parish Recycling Champion. (ii) amenity cleansing (a) Belle Vue Lane. There was nothing further to report at this stage following the action which had been taken by City Cllr Bailey to deal with this issue. (iii) dog fouling. (a) The dell. The Clerk had requested the Dog Warden to contact Cllr Paterson as to her concerns with respect to continuing dog fouling in the vicinity of the dell. (b) Footpath no 2. A request had been made to the Dog Warden for a bin to be provided on Footpath no 2. (iv) litter bins. Litter bins at the play area and the Village Hall were being monitored to check the regularity of their emptying. (v) lengthsman. There was nothing further to report at this stage. (vi) sewers. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

10 Trees and hedges. (i) Access to footpath 2 from Oaklands. Further inquiries were being made by the Clerk to establish the extent of the City Council's ownership. (ii) hedge, Guilden Sutton Lane. It was agreed a visit should be made in connection with an overgrown hedge which had been mentioned by a Member.

11 Cheshire Association of Local Councils. (i) Chester Area meeting. It was noted the annual meeting would be held on Wednesday 4 July 2007. It was agreed the Clerk should be nominated as Honorary Secretary. (ii) Communications with Councils and Councillors. The Clerk was progressing the correspondence received from the Chief Officer with respect to improving methods of communication with councils and councillors. The Chief Officer had requested to be advised of the names and contact details of representatives to the Area Meeting and of the names and contact details of all councillors in order to forward documents and notice of events relevant to them in their role as councillor which were not necessarily required to pass through the Council.

12 Chester City Council (i) maintenance of churchyards and burial grounds. A response was awaited to the invitation to the parochial church council to apply for a matching grant of £250 towards the cost incurred in maintaining the churchyard. (iii) Gowy North Area Committee 10 May 2007. A request had been made for arisings from mowing to be collected from the amenity areas at the dell and Fox Cover.

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

14 Local Government Review. Further to the presentations by the County and City Councils minuted above it was proposed by Cllr Bayton, seconded by Cllr Fisher and agreed unanimously that there was no merit in any disaggregation of the services at present provided by the County Council which amounted to 80 per cent of provision in Chester district by value. A one unitary solution was therefore preferred. The Council noted further a paper prepared by the Clerk which outlined issues the Council would wish to see dealt with whichever option was preferred by the Secretary of State or none. It was agreed this should be forwarded to the Secretary of State as an addendum to the decision referred to above.

The Council's agreed response would be:

*'Given the trend in both the public and private sectors towards larger organisational structures, together with the regional agenda and proposals for more powerful conurbations, the Council can see no merit in any proposal which would disaggregate Cheshire County Council which already administers 80% by value of local government services in Chester District. It therefore supports one unitary council for the present County Council area. This decision does not seek to indicate any preference for the County Council rather than the City Council. Both are excellent authorities with which the Parish Council has good relationships. It is simply a judgement as to the most robust structure for the future.*

*Local working arrangements of the highest order will be crucial, as required by the Government, and the Council regards the impressive proposals already published by the County Council as a good starting point. However, should Ministers be minded to approve either bid, the Council asks that the following points might also be reflected in their decision. Equally, the principal authorities are invited to grip the thrust of these concerns should there be no change,*

- (i) Double taxation. Financial mechanisms should be required to be in place to eliminate this burden.*
- (ii) Rural proofing. Within the local working arrangements proposed for the City of Chester and the immediately surrounding parishes, including Guilden Sutton, policies should be in place to ensure the provision of services is rural proofed to avoid disadvantage to the rural area. The benefits of the successful Goway North Area Committee operated by the City Council, which covers Guilden Sutton, should be embraced by the new unitary authority. A 'think parish' approach should be an important part of the unitary council's culture.*
- (iii) Decision taking. Similarly procedures should safeguard the ability of parish councils to influence decisions. Parish councils should be represented at an early stage in the membership of groups formed to deal with setting up arrangements for new structures within the unitary council and should thereafter have a constitutional right to full voting membership of committees taking decisions on issues affecting the rural area. The provisions in the existing charter to ensure the Parish voice is heard should be strengthened. Parishes should be consulted at an early stage, before decisions are reached, on proposals affecting their constituents.*
- (iv) Communications. The new unitary authority should reintroduce the Parish Friend concept to assist those parishes which do not have direct principal authority experience available to them and others should a difficulty arise. Charter standards for issues including consultation and response times for inquiries should be strengthened. Given the democratic core will be more distant, IT should be employed to provide access to debate. The best features of both the existing County Council and City Council web sites should be regarded as a starting point.*



(v) *Training. The new unitary authority should work closely with the Cheshire Association of Local Councils to ensure comprehensive training opportunities are available, initially to enable an understanding of the working arrangements and procedures of the new authority but then on a continuing basis to enhance the capacity of parish Members and Clerks to represent their communities.'*

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

16 CPRE. There were no action items to report.

17 Health. There were no action items to report.

18 Policing. (i) Chester Police Forum. It was noted that future meetings would take place on Tuesday 10 July in the Village Hall, Common Lane, Waverton, Tuesday 9 October, 2007 in St Theresa's Parish Centre, Blacon and Tuesday 15 January 2008 in St Mary's Centre, St Mary's Hill, Chester, all at 7pm. (ii) Cheshire Police Authority review of the effectiveness of police forums, Wednesday 13 June 2007, Constabulary headquarters. Cllr Moulton reported on this meeting convened by the Police Authority to discuss the future of Police Forums. The Parish Council believed that more should be done to publicise ward walks.

19 Newsletter. The Clerk reported an issue was being prepared referring to the newly elected Council, and containing a summary of the Council's annual report.

20 Memorial garden. There was nothing further to report in the absence of Cllr Hughes as to the introduction of colour into the garden which at present was planted with shrubs.

21 Bulb planting. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

22 Parish ICT. Cllr Fisher was pleased to report the village web site continued to attract international attention.

23 Primary School. There was nothing further to report at this stage in the absence of Cllr Hughes.

24 Remembrance Sunday Service (i) Fallen of the First War. Cllr Paterson reported further. A comprehensive list had been prepared of the fallen of both conflicts, some of whom were from outside the parish.

Further inquiries as to these names would be made by Cllr Moulton. The draft list of names would be placed on the web site.

25 Overhead electricity supply lines, Church Lane. The Clerk reported that Scottish Power had declined to inspect in the absence of any information as to a specific problem at a specific location. The Clerk would pursue this disappointing response with Cllr Hughes.  
Action: The Clerk.

26 Uneven flags, private land, Summerfield Road. The Clerk reported the flags were being attended to.

27 Planning post cards. The request by Cllr Fisher for a further supply of planning post cards was being progressed.

28 Condition of land. The untidy condition of land, referred to by a Member, was being notified to City Cllr B J Bailey. Action: The Clerk.

29 Annual parish meeting: matters arising. The issues raised by members of the public at the

annual parish meeting were being addressed by the Clerk. These included the condition of the City Council amenity area at Fox Cover, including the 'no ball games' sign, the state of part of the planting at the shops in Summerfield Road and the provision of bins for the reception of canine faeces.

30 Disability Discrimination Act: barrier, Hill Top Road. The issue was to be pursued by City Cllr B J Bailey.

31 The Cllr J R Boughton Award. The Clerk reported his understanding that the closing date for nominations was Friday June 22.

32 Members information items.

Parking. A Member expressed concern as to the degree of parking on Guilden Sutton Lane and Middlecroft.

Customer Service. A Member updated the Council as to a complaint he had raised through City Cllr B J Bailey as to lack of customer service from the City Council in connection with obtaining election documents.

Grounds maintenance. A Member advised he had been made aware that grounds maintenance was not being carried out by the highway authority contractor to an area on Cinder Lane due to an absence of mapping.

33 Information correspondence.

Mid Cheshire Footpath Society: Walks programme July - December 2007.

Chester City Council: Chester in Bloom, Smoke Free Chester information pack.

Cheshire County Council: highways and transportation local joint committee 31 May, 2007, Chester Matters May 2007, youth opportunities and youth capital funds 2007/08.

CPRE: Cheshire News and events April 2007.

Clerks and Councils Direct May 2007.

Part II.

(Cllr Fisher left the room.)

Claim for compensation. The Clerk reported on the circumstances in which a tyre on Cllr Fisher's private vehicle had been accidentally damaged, requiring replacement, during the use of the speed indicator device. The Clerk reported Cllr Fisher had provided documentary evidence and the Council's insurers had confirmed the excess would be greater than the claim. In the circumstances, the Clerk believed it would be wholly reasonable for the Member to be reimbursed by the Council as a matter of urgency. He confirmed there would be no gain to Cllr Fisher as the tyre to be replaced was in new condition. It was proposed by Cllr Bayton, seconded by Cllr Paterson and agreed that the payment should be transacted at this meeting.