

Guilden Sutton Parish Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Council held on Monday 6 October 2008 in Guilden Sutton Village Hall.

Chairman: Cllr D Fisher.

Present: Cllrs I Brown, D M Fisher, D Hughes, J Hughes, M Kerfoot, W Moulton, P M Paterson, M S J Roberts.

In attendance: County Cllr E Johnson.

Public Speaking Time.

Mrs Y Kirk reported a faulty light on the steps at Fox Cover.

Speaking to correspondence she had submitted, Mrs Kirk further raised suggestions as to the future maintenance regime for the parish car park.

Mr I Girling, 3 Old Hall Park referred to the need for regular future pruning of the remaining trees following the completion of the improvement scheme.

Mrs Judith Latham referred to a proposal to install fencing to the side of the Village Hall in connection with the use of the Marigold Room by pre school children and sought the support of the Council in enabling the project to proceed.

1 Apologies. Apologies were received from City Cllr B J Bailey, City Cllr S Parker and PC M Baker.

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 after making a statement should they so wish under clause 12 (ii) of the code. 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.

Cllr P M Paterson declared a personal interest in the item relating to the provision of fencing at the Village Hall as an office holder in the Guilden Sutton Community Association.

Cllr D Hughes declared a personal interest in the item relating to the provision of fencing at the Village Hall as an office holder in the Guilden Sutton Community Association.

Cllr I Brown declared a personal interest in the item relating to the provision of fencing at the Village Hall as a member of the committees of two user groups.

(ii) Confirmation of the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Council held on Monday 1 September 2008 in Guilden Sutton Village Hall. The minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Council held on Monday 1 September, 2008 in Guilden Sutton Village Hall were proposed by Cllr Hughes, seconded by Cllr Kerfoot and agreed.

(iii) Dates of future meetings:

10 November and 1 December 2008.

5 January, 2 February, 2 March, 6 April, 11 May, 8 June, 20 July, 7 September, 5 October, 2 November,
7 December 2009. 08/09 054

(iv) (a) Chairmanship training 2 September 2008. This had been attended by Cllrs Fisher, Hughes and Moulton. Cllr Fisher expressed the view that the Chief Officer of the Association, Mrs J Weaver, had been an excellent tutor and was exceedingly knowledgeable. The course had been very useful and he would recommend Members to attend future similar training courses. (b) CiLCA qualification. The Clerk would advise the Council in due course of his progress towards completing the qualification. (c) Training: general. It was noted that details of remaining courses to be held in 2008 by the Cheshire Training Partnership had previously been circulated by the Clerk. Members who were interested in a particular course would notify the Clerk with a view to the Council being represented on each course with those Members attending reporting back.

(v) Primary School Travel Group. Following the presentation by Mr G Collins at the July meeting, which had highlighted a large number of issues in which both the Parish Council and the Parish Plan Steering Group had an interest, it was noted that Cllr Hughes and the Clerk were to attend a meeting of the group to be held on Tuesday 4 November 2008 at 8am.

(vi) Standards:(a) Appointment of parish council representatives on the Cheshire West and Chester shadow authority. The Clerk reported the receipt of advice from the Chief Officer, Cheshire Association of Local Councils, by letter dated 4 September 2008, of the need for the Cheshire West and Chester Council to appoint a Standards Committee and for that committee to include parish representatives. He understood that Cllr M S J Roberts had hoped to be able to express an interest but Cllr Roberts confirmed with regret that he had been unable to proceed. (b) Correspondence per Chester City Council Ethics and Standards committee. The Clerk reported the receipt of this correspondence, by letter dated 26 September 2008 from the Monitoring Officer, which he had circulated to all Members.

3 Planning.

(i) New applications:

Householder issues:

08/01150/FUL (amended description) replacement conservatory extension, enlargement of dwelling by adding front and rear roof dormers at Wicker House, Wicker Lane CH3 7EL for Mr G Hughes. No objection had been raised as the Council was not persuaded the proposal would have an unacceptable harm on the openness of the Green Belt.

08/01544/FUL garage to side of dwelling at Cherry Bank, Church Lane for Mr D Phillips. No objection had been raised. The Council had welcomed the fact that a sandstone wall was to be retained.

08/01644/FUL amendments to 07/00366/FUL and additional single storey extension at Brackendale, Church Lane for Mr and Mrs Jessop. Further inquiries would be made by Cllr D Hughes and Cllr J Hughes.

(ii) Decision notices.

08/01150/FUL (amended description) replacement conservatory extension, enlargement of dwelling by adding front and rear roof dormers at Wicker House, Wicker Lane CH3 7EL for Mr G Hughes. Planning permission.

08/01544/FUL garage to side of dwelling at Cherry Bank, Church Lane for Mr D Phillips. Planning permission.

(iii) Development control. The Clerk reported new rules covering permitted development had been introduced by the Government on 1 October 2008. These would allow proposals such as rear extensions and loft conversions without the need for an application. They would not apply to existing properties where permitted development rights had been removed. There was a new requirement for porous drives. The Clerk hoped to be able to obtain further advice for Members which could then be included in the newsletter.

(iv) Parish Plan: progress report. Cllr Paterson reported that questionnaires had been distributed and those which had been returned were being assessed. It was hoped a feedback meeting would be arranged in due course.

08/09 055

(v) Strategic planning.

North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy for 2021. The Clerk reported the receipt of advice from the Government Office for the North West of the publication of this strategy.

4 Parish car park.

(i) Grounds maintenance. There was nothing further to report at this stage as to the need for the boundary planting and the condition of the hard surfacing to be returned to specification as discussed at a meeting with the grounds maintenance contractor. This would be pursued on the completion of the improvement scheme.

(ii) Improvement scheme. The Clerk reported he had sought estimates for work to the trees and also to the boundary planting in order to progress the improvement scheme which was due to be completed by mid-October. Following consideration of the estimates, which in total were within the £2,000 threshold previously agreed, Members had held site meetings with the preferred contractors for both the tree work and the planting. Cllr Hughes reported further on the detailed specifications which had been drawn up. It was noted that so far as the tree work was concerned, the contractor's estimate would provide for the removal of most of the large Sycamores, rather than pruning, to bring light to the area whilst retaining the green aspect.

The Clerk reported that having visited adjoining occupiers with letters, the proposed work to the trees had been welcomed, particularly by occupiers at 3 and 5 Old Hall Park both of whom had offered access.

It was proposed by Cllr Hughes, seconded by Cllr Brown and agreed that the identified estimates for the proposed tree work and for the refurbishment of the planting should be accepted subject if necessary to a further site meeting to confirm the details.

(iii) Repairs to signage. The Clerk was endeavouring to obtain estimates, including a quotation for the replacement of the entire sign which, on inspection, was in need of refurbishment.

5 Leisure Services.

(i) Children's Playing Field:

(a) Grounds maintenance issues. The condition of the ditch, which would normally have 1 no clearance a year, would be revisited at the October meeting.

(b) Mole infestation. There was no requirement for a further report at this stage.

(c) Repairs to goalmouths. There was no requirement for a further report at this stage.

(d) State of nets. It was noted some wear and tear had occurred to a number of the ties.

(e) Basket ball equipment. The condition of the mesh would be revisited at the October meeting.

(ii) Children's Play Area.

(a) CCTV and CCTV protocol. The CCTV protocol would be revisited in due course.

(b) Inspections. Cllr Paterson and the Clerk referred to the continuing deterioration in the condition of the safety surfacing. The outcome of the statutory annual inspection would be awaited pending a further approach to the contractor. A revised rota had been prepared by the Clerk and circulated.

(c) Litter bin emptying. There was no requirement for a further report at this stage.

(d) Grounds maintenance issues. It was not apparent if the need for the boundary hedge to be cut had been progressed by the grounds maintenance contractor. An inspection would be made by the Clerk.

08/09 056

(e) Cleansing of equipment. Following the advice of the City Council that an approach should be made to a specialised contractor as to the proposed cleansing, the Clerk reported the receipt of an estimate in the sum of £100. It was agreed this would not be pursued at this stage.

(iii) Public Footpaths.

(a) Footpath 7. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

(b) Footpath 2. (i) Site meeting. Following the site meeting which he had attended with City Cllr S Parker and the relevant officer on Tuesday 11 March 2008 as to the condition of the footpath, the Clerk reported he was still awaiting advice from the City Council officer as to seeking a quotation from an alternative contractor. The Chairman expressed renewed concern at the continuing deterioration in the condition of the path. It was noted the Parish Partnership Reception was to be held prior to the next meeting of the Council which might afford an opportunity for the issue to be raised. (ii) Sign, Church Lane. It was not known at this stage what action, if any, had been taken by the Public Rights of Way Unit as to the position of the signpost at the junction of Church Lane and Footpath 2 which had been raised with the unit by the Parish Paths Warden. (iii) Maintenance. There was nothing further to report this stage as to the outcome of the Clerk's representations to the Highways and Transportation Local Joint Committee with respect to the maintenance of the new steps for Footpath 2, the adjoining level section of the path and the adjoining section of the Longster Trail running between the hedges on Cinder Lane. (iv) Steps. It was noted the surface of the steps was already suffering from detritus. (v) Arisings. The Clerk reported he had made a further inspection of the arisings deposited at the side of the path following maintenance to a hedge and suggested, in his view, that no further action was required at this stage.

(c) Footpath 1. It was noted the large wooden gates had been removed.

(d) Parish Paths Group. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

(e) Mid Cheshire Footpath Society. There was no correspondence to report to this meeting.

(f) Parish Small Grants Scheme for Countryside Access Improvements. The correspondence dated 14 August 2008, advising of a successful bid by the County Council for funding to again run the scheme in 2008/09, had been referred to the Parish Paths Warden. The aim would be to provide parish and town councils with funding towards projects which would attract countryside users and assist the local economy through grants of up to £2,000. There was a requirement for projects to be completed by 31 March 2009.

(iv) Grounds Maintenance.

(a) Vale. The Chairman expressed concern at the amount of growth in the grass at the Fox Cover amenity area. This had been reported. Cllr Paterson expressed the view that more regular cutting was required.

(b) Parish Council contract 2008/09. There was no requirement for a further report at this stage.

(c) Highway authority. Cllr Paterson referred to grass-cutting on the verges in Guilden Sutton Lane.

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

(vi) Landscaping, Fox Cover. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

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

(viii) Cheshire Year of Gardens. Appropriate publicity would be sought on completion of the parish car park project.

(ix) Guilden Sutton Community Association: Proposed fencing. The Council noted the request made by Mrs Latham at public speaking together with additional information provided by Cllr Hughes as Chairman of the Association. It was proposed by Cllr Moulton, seconded by Cllr Kerfoot and agreed on a 7-0 vote with one abstention that comfort could be provided in the ordering of the fencing, subject to full justification being provided by the Association and to conditions to ensure there would be no risk to public funds. 08/09 057 This would be referred to the Chairman and Cllr Jane Hughes. It was further agreed that any future similar applications from any source should include full documentation prior to being considered on their merits.

6 Public transport.

(i) C35. It was noted it was unlikely an earlier service at 9am, as had been sought, would be viable.

(ii) Public meeting. Cllr Roberts, as Local Bus User Contact, reported on the drop in which had been held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 16 September from 7pm to 8.30pm following publicity in the newsletter. The Council indicated its pleasure that County Cllr E Moore Dutton, Executive Member for Highways and Transportation and County Cllr E Johnson had attended with members of the public. Cllr Hughes welcomed the contributions which had been made and it was agreed at the suggestion of Cllr Roberts these should be included in the newsletter. Cllr Paterson further indicated they could be taken into account as part of the Parish Plan process. It was agreed that representations should be made to the operator (Helms of Eastham) and to Cheshire County Council for improved services after Cllr Paterson had referred to the availability of funding for rural services.

(iii) Bus stand, Guilden Sutton Lane. County Cllr E Johnson referred to the Council's request for the adjoining overgrown hedge to be trimmed to improve visibility.

(iv) C80. Cllr Roberts referred to the impending closure of Station Lane which would result in the suspension of this service, the busiest of those serving the parish. He would endeavour to raise the issue with Helms.

7 Highways.

(i) Strategic matters. There was nothing to report.

(ii) Local matters.

Members noted the following items which had been raised with the Area Maintenance Engineer including those which were the subject of specific minutes.

Maintenance:

Oaklands, carriageway defects approaching junction with School Lane at Wood Farm.

Guilden Sutton Lane, trip hazard at the site of a fall.

Guilden Sutton Lane, drainage issue at a field entrance.

Wicker Lane, proposed resurfacing.

Station Lane, condition.

Obscured road signs including Belle Vue Lane and Station Lane.

Migration of gravel.

Condition of cycle route Church Lane - Cinder Lane.

Overgrown hedges, Cinder Lane.

Guilden Sutton Lane, lighting obscured by trees.

Guilden Sutton Lane, overgrown hedges at two properties.

Footpath 2, condition.

Heath Bank, shrubbery, need for pruning.

Guilden Sutton Lane, obstruction of footway by nettles.

School Lane, encroachment onto the highway.

Traffic:

A 41/Guilden Sutton Lane, road rage, double parking in the gap, reinstatement of crossroads, installation of traffic signals, provision of crossing for cyclists and pedestrians as part of a safe route to school, traffic conditions on car boot Sundays.

Speed reviews, A41, Guilden Sutton Lane, Wicker Lane, Hare Lane.

Signing and lining: Guilden Sutton Lane at playing field, extend red patch "SLOW" marking and restore disturbed surface. 08/09 058

Porters Hill, remove centre line, add in edgeline, increase width of footway, provide rumble strips, install signals, reduce tree canopy.

Summerfield Road, disabled parking bay at shops.

Permissive paths, Station Lane, Wicker Lane.

Hare Lane, speed of traffic, double parking in vicinity of Rugby Club.

Wilding Business Estate, emerging traffic.

SatNavs, request for weight restrictions on unsuitable roads.

The Clerk was raising the possibility of seeking a site meeting to enable officers to inspect some of the issues which he had raised.

(a) Speed issues. (i) Speed indicator device. The statistics from the most recent use of the equipment would be sought from the City Council. Cllr Hughes believed the council should continue with the use of the device and believed this would be helped by the appointment of a central co-ordinator. Cllr Moulton kindly offered to undertake this task. (ii) Police radar. A renewed approach had been made to the Project Rural Matters Co-ordinator, Mr D Bowker, as to a police radar check being carried out within the parish on the basis of the information gathered by the speed indicator device and the concerns expressed by a Member as to the proportion of motorists exceeding the limit. The Clerk reported that in addressing the Highways and Transportation Local Joint Committee on Thursday 18 September 2008 in connection with the proposed 30mph speed limit on Guilden Sutton Lane he had requested a police radar check having been advised by Cllr Paterson of a recorded 45mph in the 30mph limit that morning. He had subsequently been advised by the Rural Inspector a Police SID would be deployed. Cllr Hughes referred to media comment by the Rural Inspector which moved towards education rather than enforcement. The Chairman indicated his view that the use of the speed indicator equipment had a beneficial effect. At the suggestion of Cllr Kerfoot a note on the use of the SID equipment by the Parish Council would appear in the newsletter.

(b) Signing and lining schemes. (i) Gateway treatment, Guilden Sutton Lane - red patch SLOW marking. A response was awaited from the highway authority. (ii) A response was awaited to the suggestion by Cllr Kerfoot that a lining scheme or rumble strips on Porters Hill would improve safety.

(c) Speed review, Guilden Sutton Lane. Further to the receipt of advice, by correspondence dated 11 August 2008, of a proposal by the highway authority to introduce a 30mph limit on the present 40mph limit, the Clerk reported he had addressed the highways and transportation local joint committee for Chester which had considered a report on the issue. The committee had agreed the proposal should be advertised for public consultation. The Clerk further reported that at the time it was not clear if the introduction of such a limit, if approved, would lead to the loss of repeater signs. He had also questioned whether the lighting on the built up section of Guilden Sutton Lane was to footway standard or not. That aspect had also been raised by County Cllr E Johnson.

(d) Speed review, Wicker Lane/Hare Lane. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

(e) Hare Lane. There was nothing further to report at this stage as to the concerns with respect to the speed of traffic on Hare Lane and double parking in the vicinity of the rugby club.

(f) Footway rear Cathcart Green/Summerfield Road. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

(g) Parking, Arrowcroft Road. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

(h) Flags, Summerfield Road. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

(i) Disabled access to shops. The issues identified at the meeting between the Clerk and the Access Officer on 19 December 2007 would be revisited.

(j) Junction A41/Guilden Sutton Lane. There was nothing further to add to the Clerk's understanding that traffic conditions at this junction, particularly on those Sunday mornings when car boot sales were held at Chester Rugby Club, were to be monitored by PC Baker and the police traffic liaison officer.

(k) Road signs. Members would advise the Clerk if they became aware of any road signs in and around the village which were obscured by vegetation. 08/09 059

(l) Migration of gravel. There was nothing further to report at present.

(m) Porters Hill. A response was awaited from the highway authority as to the issue raised by Cllr Hughes concerning poor visibility encountered by motorists driving up the hill and a suggestion that traffic signals might improve safety. The effect of trees overhanging the road had also been referred. Cllr Kerfoot remained of the view there was a case for action being taken to reduce the trees and to install white lines, "SLOW" markings and warning signs.

(n) Path, Cinder Lane to Church Lane. It was not known what action had been taken by the highway authority as to the condition of this path.

(o) Emerging traffic, Wilding Business Estate. Cllr Moulton believed there had been a mild improvement in adherence to the stop sign by emerging traffic.

(p) Station Lane. It was not known what progress had been made with the intention to close Station Lane for a period of three weeks on or after 22 September 2008 to enable carriageway drainage and associated works to be carried out.

(iii) Lighting. It was noted that some lights on Guilden Sutton Lane continued to be obstructed by trees and that this had been reported to the highway authority. The fault referred to by Mrs Kirk would be reported together with others on The Dell and Guilden Sutton Lane.

8 Finance:

Income:

Co-op Bank

Interest

5 August £ 14.71

Chester City Council

graveyard grant 2008/09 £ 250.00

(ii) Payments:

Gresty

Grounds mntce/

Lengthsman £ 309.00

Direct2Door

Newsletter distribution £ 27.03 (VAT £4.03)

ChALC

Training £ 90.00

Clerk:

Salary

(July 1 – Sept 30) £ 1,079.33

Expenses:

Postage
(newsletter) £ 20.70

Photocopies
204 @ 5p £ 10.20

08/09 060

Mileage
12 @ 40p £ 4.80
£ 35.70

Proposed by Cllr Paterson
Seconded by Cllr Roberts
and agreed.

(iii) Balances

Co-operative Bank
19 Aug 2008 £12,188.34

Scottish Widows no 1
1 July 2008 £20,349.25

Scottish Widows no 2
12 June 2008 £ 2,545.69

(iv) Report on contingency payments.

Budget: £ 1,305.00
Payments: £ NIL

(v) Insurance. (a) Fidelity. The application form obtained from the insurers with respect to the proposed increase in the fidelity limit remained to be completed. (b) Further consideration would be given to a number of individual elements within the insurance initially by Cllr Hughes and the Clerk. The same would apply to possible alternative providers, including the Council's bankers which had recently made an approach. This would enable the market to be tested.

(vi) Transfer to Clerk's gratuity account. The transfer in respect of 2008/09 would be advised by Cllr Hughes. Action: Cllr Hughes.

(viii) External Audit. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

9 Environment Services:

(i) Recycling issues. Cllr Roberts, Parish Recycling Champion, indicated there was nothing further to report at present.

(ii) Amenity cleansing. (a) Site meeting, Belle Vue Lane. Following the site meeting with he had attended with City Cllr S Parker and the relevant officer on Tuesday 11 March 2008 as to the condition of the accesses, the Clerk reported he was still awaiting advice from City Council officers as to seeking a quotation from an alternative contractor. Action: The Clerk. (b) White Tornado. There was nothing further to report at present as to the suggestion this activity should be resumed. (c) Fly tipping. The Clerk was inquiring as to the outcome of the indication from Derek Bowker Esq, Project Co-ordinator, Project Rural Matters of the intention of the project to achieve positive action with respect to persistent flytipping in the rural area.

(iii) Dog fouling. (a) The dell. There was nothing further to report at this stage as to Cllr Paterson's request to be contacted by the Dog Warden with respect to continuing dog fouling in the vicinity of the dell. (b) Footpath 2. A response was awaited to the request to the Dog Warden for a bin to be provided on public footpath no 2.

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

(v) Graffiti, Summerfield Road. It was agreed that no further action should be taken at this stage.

08/09 061

10 Trees and Hedges.

(i) Access to public footpath no 2 from Oaklands. A response was awaited from the senior estates surveyor to determine the extent of the City Council's ownership of the access to footpath 2 at the rear of Porters Croft.

(ii) Hedges, Guilden Sutton Lane. A Member referred to the need for a hedge at the approach to the diversion, which had vigorous growth and was obstructing the footway, to be pruned.

(iii) Canopy, Porters Hill. There was nothing further to report at present as to the issue raised by Mr Jackson which had been referred to the highway authority.

(iv) Hedges, Porters Hill. There was nothing further to report at present as to the concern expressed by a Member that overgrown hedges on Porters Hill were at head height.

11 Cheshire Association of Local Councils.

(i) Chester Area Meeting. It was noted that Mrs Jackie Weaver, Chief Officer of the Cheshire Association of Local Councils, would attend the next Area Meeting to be held on 15 October 2008.

(ii) Annual meeting. The Clerk reminded Members the annual meeting of the Association would take place on Thursday 23 October 2008 in Middlewich Civic Hall.

(iii) Cheshire West and Chester Council, consultation on Area Programme Boards. The Clerk reported he had attended the facilitated session which had taken place on Tuesday 16 September 2008 at The Fourways Inn, Chester Road, Delamere. The outcome had remained unclear.

12 Chester City Council (i) Gowy North Area Committee. The Council received a report on the meeting of the Gowy North Area Committee held on Thursday 4 September 2008 which had been preceded by a consultation by the Cheshire West and Chester Council on neighbourhood and area working. (ii) John Boughton Award. No nominations had come forward prior to the closing date of Friday 26 September 2008. (iii) The Council noted the annual Parish Partnership Reception was to take place on 29 October 2008 at 7.30pm in The Guildhall. Nominations were due by Friday 17 October 2008. It was agreed the Council would be represented by the Chairman and Clerk. (ii) CWAC parish issues log. The Clerk reported the receipt, by letter from Mrs Anne Lancaster, parish liaison officer and area manager of her involvement in the preparation of this work which was intended to ensure the new Cheshire West and Chester Council had an accurate picture of current and desired arrangements involving parish councils.

13 Cheshire County Council: Chairman's Garden Party for Local Councils. Following the receipt of advice, by letter dated 17 July 2008, of an invitation for the Council to attend a Chairman's Garden Party for Local Councils at Tatton Park on Tuesday 30 September 2008 to celebrate the County Council's long-standing and successful partnership with Cheshire's local councils and the Cheshire Association of Local Councils which had been built up over many years, it had not been possible for the council to be represented.

14 Cheshire West and Chester Council: Consultation, Area and Neighbourhood Working. The Clerk reported the following response had been made:

(i) The Council is frustrated that despite the Chairman, Members and Clerk having attended a number of meetings in connection with the consultation over the summer period, it cannot feel confident it has been provided with sufficient information to respond to the consultation document. It therefore wishes to put forward the following comments which define what Members would expect from area and neighbourhood working and hopefully contribute to the debate as to how this might be achieved.

(ii) The Council welcomes the stated intention of the new authority to deliver local services in new, more personal ways in which parish councils will have a key and valued role.

(iii) Members appreciate the bid document commits the new council to the introduction of area and neighbourhood working but are unable to reconcile that with the proposal for eight large programme boards covering large populations and in some cases extensive geographic areas with the inherent danger of remoteness.

(iv) In simple terms, the Council seeks arrangements which will enable it to play a full and positive part in the aspiration expressed in (ii) above. It wishes to see within any local arrangements the ability to articulate and champion the needs of the parish, the opportunity to be informed of and influence policies which affect the local delivery of services and a mechanism to enable it be fully consulted on a similar range of issues to those which are contained in the existing Cheshire Charter. We would be happy to expand on this list if necessary.

The Council fully recognises there is a valuable role to be played by other stakeholders within any local arrangements in order to ensure the highest quality of local provision. It believes this must be within the context of decisions being taken only by elected members with all local elected members of either the first tier or the principal authority being adequately informed and enabled to influence the debate.

The arrangements must provide for all residents, elected members and stakeholders to be able to participate at a local level at meetings held in the community.

(v) The Council believes there is merit in the emerging argument which envisages 12 local bodies, based on the former county divisions, each comprising two adjacent wards, which would go some way to achieving at least recognisable communities of interest.

(vi) The Council is concerned that the consultation appears to have failed to explain how any emerging local arrangements would influence the unitary council itself. The Council believes the local strategic partnership arrangement is largely unknown at local level whereas the present arrangements in Chester District, with the direct involvement of all local principal authority members and informed area managers, provides confidence that issues which are raised will be dealt with or taken into account as appropriate. In the absence of guidance, the Council would wish to see the continuation of a direct link between any local arrangements and the unitary authority.

(vii) As stated above, Guilden Sutton Parish Council is keen to assist the new authority to realise its aspirations at local level. To do this, it must be able to understand the procedures involved and would wish to see the new authority provide high quality training and on going support to ensure members and the clerk are able to grasp the opportunities which will be available and are able to derive the best possible value, both in terms of local services and devolved budgets and informed decision taking by members of the new authority on behalf of local people.

This response may be subject to update.

The Council would wish to be kept informed of the update on the consultation.

15 Cheshire Community Action. 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 Have Your Say. It was noted that future meetings would take place on Tuesday 14 October at the Barbour Institute, Tattenhall and on Tuesday 13 January 2009 at St Mary's Centre, St Mary's Hill, Chester all at 7pm.

(ii) Police/Probation initiative. A response was awaited from the Project Rural Matters Co-ordinator as to whether the scheme involving the Police and the Probation Service under which very low-level offenders, supervised by a police community support officer, could carry out work to benefit the community, encompassed environmental improvements.

(iii) Crime issues. A Member referred to possible illegal activity during the early hours in an area of the village.

(iv) Ward walk. PC Baker had kindly rearranged the intended ward walk schedule for 9.30am on Sunday 14 September 2008 to 7pm Friday 19 September 2008 following the indication by Members they would prefer a ward walk at 7pm on a Friday evening.

19 Newsletter. The Clerk reported a further issue of the newsletter had been prepared to publicise the proposed community bulb planting (see beneath)

20 Memorial garden. The application form for the proposed work to the Sycamore was being completed by Cllr Brown as Parish Tree Warden.

21 Bulb planting. The proposed planting of bulbs on Footpath 7 at a community event fixed for Sunday 19 October 2008 at 2pm would be publicised in the newsletter.

22 Parish IT: (i) Cheshire Matters web site. The Clerk reported the receipt, by letter dated 8 September 2008, of advice from Cheshire County Council as to a website which had been set up, the title of which conflicted with that of a widely circulated County Council publication.

23 Primary School. (i) Tree Planting. There was nothing further to report at this stage (ii) Boundary, rear of Orchard Croft. It was noted the intended work had yet to be carried out. (iii) Community governor. It was noted there was a vacancy for a community governor. If possible, this would be included in the forthcoming issue of the newsletter.

24 Disability Discrimination Act: barrier, Hill Top Road. There was nothing further to report at this stage.

25 Land ownerships. Further consideration would be given to the suggestion by Cllr Paterson that it would be beneficial for the Council to compile a register of land ownerships which adjoined footways and public footpaths.

26 Railway fencing, Guilden Sutton Lane. There was nothing further to report at this stage as to the concerns of an occupier who had been informed by Network Rail that security fencing would be erected on the boundary of her garden and the railway embankment.

27 Department for Communities and Local Government: the making and enforcement of bylaws, consultation. Comments due Thursday 20 November 2008. The Clerk would report further to the November meeting.

28 Remembrance Sunday. It was noted the annual Remembrance Day Service would take place on Sunday 9 November 2008. Cllr Hughes reported a kind offer by Messrs Gresty to tidy the memorial in advance of the service which would be gratefully accepted.

29 Members information items.

Wicker Lane drainage. Cllr Jane Hughes reported that during recent bad weather, Wicker Lane had flooded.

Carcasses. A Member referred to the presence of carcasses on a public highway in the parish.

External activities. The Chairman said he would wish to encourage Members to attend activities outside the parish to which the Parish Council was invited.

30 Information correspondence.

ChALC/NALC: Newsletter 123 September 2008; Local Council Review September 2008.

Chester City Council: Ethics and Standards committee 11 September 2008.

Cheshire County Council: Cheshire Matters September 2008.

Cheshire Community Action: annual general meeting Wednesday 19 November, 2008; election of trustees: nominations due 14 November, 2008; appointment of proxy; annual accounts and summary financial statements; funding and advice; parish plans and community led planning.

Cheshire County Playing Fields Association: annual general meeting Thursday 9 October, 2008.

CPRE: Countryside Voice summer 2008.

The Standards Board for England: newsletter no 3.

Matters considered in the absence of the press and public.

It was proposed by Cllr Hughes, seconded by Cllr Roberts and agreed that the public and press should be excluded for consideration of the following items due to the likely disclosure of exempt information.

31 Clerk's salary. Following the outcome of the review of the Clerk's salary with effect from 1 April 2007 together with a revised spinal point, a formal minute was being prepared and would be appended to the minutes.

32 Children's Playing Field. Following the report by the Clerk that he had received an approach on behalf of the landowner with respect to the condition of the playing surface and roadside hedge and the replacement of the existing goal posts, an appropriate response had been made.

33 Lengthsman The Council visited the scope of the present lengthsman service, compared with adjoining parishes, taking account of the financial considerations.