

MINUTES OF HUNTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

19th March 2012 7.30 p.m. at Huntington Village Hall

PRESENT

Chairman Cllr. M. Williams

Cllr. Jackie Creswick

Cllr. John Creswick

Cllr. N. Dodd

Cllr. D. Ferguson

Cllr. M. Kemp

Cllr. D. McQuay

Cllr. R. Shelton

Cllr. A. Wilcox

None Councillors

Public – 12

Clerk – Mrs. A. Wright

APOLOGIES

Cllr. Carolyn Walker – Work.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None recorded.

MINUTES

12/186 RESOLVED – That the Chairman signs the minutes of the Parish Council Meetings held on 20th February 2012.

PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION

The Chairman introduced Ian Skilling, United Utilities Asset Manger & Scott Hughes who manages operations at the United Utilities water works in Huntington. Mr. Skilling gave a presentation including the following information:-

- United Utilities serves over 7m people in the North West from Crewe to the Scottish borders, using water from a number of sources in the Lake District and the River Dee.
- The Huntington Water Works are a critical part of the water supply network.
- The Waterworks was built in the early 1960s by the Liverpool Corporation Water Company to serve North Cheshire and Merseyside.
- The plant can produce 369 million litres of drinking water per day.
- Chlorine is used on the site to disinfect the water, its storage and use is very stringently regulated and emergency plans are in place in the unlikely event that there is a leak including the sirens which are tested regularly. Residents living within 1km from the water works receive a calendar providing dates and times of siren tests plus information of what to do in an emergency.
- There is a large amount of work taking place at the site to improve water quality and introduce environmental improvements including the erection of a new fish screen at the moment.
- The use of Chlorine at the site will be replaced by the generation of a weak bleach to disinfect the water through an electrical process in the next two years.
- Lagoons on land near the river hold residue from the filtered water are periodically emptied and used in agriculture as a soil conditioner. These are lagoons are being refurbished to prevent leakage.
- The site is strategically important to the supply of water regionally and will continue for the foreseeable future and UU are investing a large amount of money into the works.

The following questions were raised and discussion took place with members of the public and councillors:-

- A question was raised regarding the removal of cryptosporidium in the water supply. It was confirmed all water goes through a robust four stage treatment system.
- Concerns were raised about a water leak at the Scout Hut. Mr Hughes confirmed he would investigate this matter.
- It was asked what agricultural value the silt from the lagoons had. It was explained the sludge cake has very high nutrients and is used largely by local farms to spread on their soil.
- A question was raised about possible water shortages. It was explained that reservoirs have been created further up the Dee to store winter flood water which maintains water flows through the dry

summer and also prevents flooding. The environment agency places tight restrictions on water removal from the Dee which is licensed and looks at predicted water flows and water removal weekly. It was confirmed that water and reservoir levels in the area are as expected and water shortages are largely in the South and East.

- Concerns were raised regarding the nuisance caused by the tractors travelling daily to and from the water works. It was noted these very large tractors with trailers are travelling at over 30mph along Caldly Valley Road. It was noted although this has been reported to UU before and it was confirmed drivers had been spoken to, tractors are still speeding through Huntington. Mr Hughes asked that residents report speed tractors through the clerk. It was suggested that some of this sludge cake could be transported by boat along the Dee.
- Concerns were raised about the lighting on the site through the night. It was confirmed the plant is manned through the night and operates 24 hours a day and that the lighting was essential for safety. It was noted that the plant does not generate its own power other than in an emergency.
- It was asked if the water works could accommodate additional mobile phone masts. It was confirmed this was handled by a different department so neither Mr. Skilling or Mr. Hughes could comment.
- It was suggested that it should be stated on the front of the calendar that it includes important safety information. It was agreed this would be included on next year's calendar. It was confirmed a copy of the calendar would be sent electronically for inclusion on the council's website.
- It was noted that the speed of the tractors is frightening when stood next to or crossing the road. Mr. Hughes said he would limit drivers to 20mph on the residential roads.
- Mr. Skilling confirmed that there are no long term plans for UU the pull out from the water works. There had been some discussions regarding releasing the lagoons however it was now recognised they were still needed.
- It was asked if the public could be given access to the river through the site. It was stated that this could raise issues regarding safety on the site but it would be considered. It was noted that access to the river is provided on the Duke of Westminster's estate while also preventing access to other parts of the estate.
- It was asked if tours which used to take place of the water works would be reinstated. It was confirmed this was very unlikely as access is limited for security reasons.
- Concerns were raised regarding access which has been given to a resident on to UU land by the Scout Hut.

The chairman thanked United Utilities and Mr. Skilling for their financial sponsorship of the Christmas lights switch on and their continued supplying of the Christmas Tree which is much appreciated and for attending the meeting and answer questions.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The chairman read the police report from PC Sally Malone who had sent apologies as she was unable to attend the meeting. The report stated that between the 16th January and 13th March there had been 19 occurrences of which 2 were crimes. Following reports of drug use in the Caldly Valley area police patrols had been increased and 2 youths had been found in possession cannabis. There had been no reports of an anti-social behaviour. There had been several reports of a white van in the area looking for scrap metal, PC Malone asked anyone with any more information about the van including the registration contact the police on the new **non-emergency number 101**.

Following reports at the last meeting of learner drivers cutting up other drivers at the Sainsbury's junction PC Malone asked drivers to be patient and give learner drivers more space.

It was reported that drivers when travelling from Caldly Valley Road towards Vicars Cross are using the right hand lane then cutting back into the left to avoid queuing. The clerk confirmed she would report this to PC Malone and CW&C road safety officers.

A resident of Meadow Lane reported on a residents meeting which had taken place the previous evening and that although residents were pleased the Jubilee Field is to be improved they have 3 areas of concern.

1. Drainage & whether or not the Swales are necessary.
2. Security and the locking of the gate.
3. Enforcement of the dog ban.

The working group were requested to consider alternative layouts and to consider whether the equipment being purchased reflected the consultation results.

A suggestion was made to maintain the fenced toddler area at a reduced size to the previously existing play area.

A further suggestion was made that any budget surplus be spent on improving the field's drainage.

It was asked if the Council had written confirmation that work could be carried out on the lane.

A request was made for the working group to meeting with the Meadow Lane residents group. It was confirmed that Meadow Lane residents have a representative on the working group meaning a further meeting was not required.

It was asked why meeting had not been arranged between Meadow Lane residents and John Seiler, CW&C landscape architect. It was confirmed that substantial changes had been made to the design of the field as a result of Meadow Lane residents views and that therefore a meeting was not necessary.

A resident raised questions regarding the identification of special expenses and the Parish Council's 1% precept increase.

Concerns were raised as to whether the horse chestnut tree by the Rake and Pikel would be protected as the area is shown as having junction improvements as part of the CEG Saughton Camp development leaflet.

A member of the public asked whether daffodils would be planted on the new Sainsbury's junction to replace those lost during the changes.

A question was asked if there were plans to replace the wooden bench by St. Luke's church. It was confirmed a new bench was being ordered in the next financial year by Cheshire West and Chester Street Scene and should be in place soon.

A resident asked if there had been any reports of the new post box on The Green, Chester Road being full. The clerk confirmed she had received no complaints other than the one regarding missing collection times. It was reported that this collection information was now on the post box. Cllr. John Creswick confirmed he had used the box on a number of occasions and it had not been full.

It was noted at the last meeting it had been the council's intention to invite representatives of CEG to a future council meeting, it was confirmed that that would be inappropriate at the present time until the application is received.

PLANNING

The council noted the contents of pages 40 and 41 of the planning.

12/187 RESOLVED – That the council make the following observations with regard to planning application 12/00835/TEL, 15m lattice telecommunications tower, Oakfield Nursery, Aldford Road, Huntington, CH3 6EA:-

Huntington Parish Councils objects to this application due to its detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding open countryside which is contrary to Policy ENV75 of the Chester and District Local Plan.

The Council asks that officers confirm that the masts can not be sited at a more suitable location included on the water works site.

The Council asks if you are minded to approve this application that conditions are imposed that the mast should be designed to have as little impact as possible and that a photograph be included on the observations of a mast used at Center Parcs.

Cllr. Jacky Creswick requested that it was noted that she objected to the application but did not support the inclusion of a condition to camouflage the mast.

JUBILEE FIELD

The chairman reported that the Jubilee field had been granted Queen Elizabeth II status which will protect the Jubilee Field as a playing field for the future.

It was noted that the swales which are included in the wild flower area are also being used in the Saighton Camp development.

WEBSITE

It was reported that the working group including Cllrs. Jacky Creswick, Wilcox and Shelton had met before the meeting to consider redevelopment of the website. It was agreed the group should obtain prices for a professional website which can be updated by the Council. It was agreed that the clerk should contact groups on the website about updating their information and those who do not provide information are removed from the website and that this process be repeated annually.

ACCOUNTS & PAYMENTS

12/188 RESOLVED – That the accounts and payments were accepted as on page 51 of the cash book.

12/189 RESOLVED – That the clerk be reimbursed for paper and envelopes purchased, £35.44.

12/190 RESOLVED – That the council pay Barlows Electrical £48.00 + vat to install 2 new sockets on The Green, Chester Road.

WORK PROGRAMME

The council noted the work programme and raised the following items:-

- That the missing Caldly Valley Road and Gorse Way road signs, on Gorse way opposite the junction, be added to the work programme along with the enquiry as to when the new pedestrian traffic lights will be working on Chester Road, by the water works entrance and when SCOOT will become operational.

12/191 RESOLVED – That the council goes into private session to consider item 11 to 13 on the agenda.

PART 2

GRASS CUTTING ON THE JUBILEE FIELD

12/191 RESOLVED – that the clerk negotiate grass cutting with the Countywide Grounds Maintenance depending on cost.

GRASS CUTTING ON THE GREEN

12/192 RESOLVED – that Shelley Seeds be appointed to carryout grass cutting and maintenance on The Green as per the submitted quotation.

INSURANCE PREMIUM 2012-2013

12/193 RESOLVED – That the clerk investigate a reduced premium by raising the excess and that taking this into account the council accepts the quote as supplied by Came and Company Parish Council insurance for the Council including the new Jubilee field equipment.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm

**The NEXT meeting of the Parish Council is on Monday 16th April 2012
at Huntington Village Hall from 7.30pm.**

Signed

Dated

Ann Wright
22nd March 2012