

MINUTES OF HUNTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

17th September 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. R. Shelton

Cllr. C. Walker

Cllr. A. Wilcox

None Councillors

Speakers – Dave Hancock, Martin Williams (Welsh Water) and John Evans (CW&C Highways)

Public –11

Clerk – Mrs. A. Wright

The chairman welcomed all to the Parish Council meeting and explained that in his role as CW&C councillor he would be acting as a reserve at the Strategic Planning Committee on Thursday 20th September which would consider the Saighton Camp planning application.

The Chairman introduced Dave Hancock from the Welsh Water's new development team and Martin Williams Welsh Water network manager who were at the meeting to respond to concerns about drainage and flooding issues in the area plus concerns regarding Welsh Water's objection withdrawal for the current Saighton Camp planning application.

PC Sally Malone gave the following Police Report for the period 1st to 17th September; one occurrence had been reported during the period where a shed had been broken into and a bicycle stolen. It was noted over £22,000 worth of bicycles are stolen each year in the Chester area and that the majority of their owners are not able to give police basic details about their bike including the make or serial numbers as a result there are a large number of unclaimed bikes at Blacon police station which get auctioned off. The police are therefore encouraging people to register their bikes at www.immobilise.com. Bikes shops in Chester register sold bikes on this website and the new owners will receive a confirmation e-mail from the police. There have been no incidences of anti social behaviour (asb) during this period, the police and community safety wardens have regularly visited the Jubilee Field but have found no evidence of asb, they will continue to visit the field.

The Police and PCSO's had taken 42 youths including girls to an activity day in Warrington.

The Police continue to carry out driver engagement days in the area in partnership with the Fire Brigade on the last day 30 drivers were stopped for speeding, not wearing a seat belt or using a mobile phone while driving, these drivers are then invited to watch a safety video.

Complaints have been received about parking at school dropping off and collection times on Butterbache Road, the school is sending out letters to parents reminding them to park considerately.

Concerns were raised about vehicles parking at the junction of Butterbache and Meadow Lane with 3 cars parking there overnight on Friday.

Concerns were raised regarding road safety when travelling from the Red House into Chester, it was noted that vehicles are often parked both sides of the road and vehicles are travelling in the middle of the road leaving on-coming traffic no where to go and this problem is getting worse.

The question was asked if car theft is increasing in the Chester area. PC Malone stated car theft was not increasing but remained steady in Chester although it was not a frequent occurrence in the Huntington area. The Chairman thanked PC Malone for her attendance.

APOLOGIES

Cllr. McQuay – Work commitment.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No interests declared.

MINUTES

12/227 RESOLVED – That the Chairman signs the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 16th July as a true and proper record.

Q&A SESSION – WELSH WATER

The Chairman invited Mr. John Ackerley (resident) to highlight concerns regarding drainage in Huntington. Mr. Ackerley raised the following points:-

- He had spent the last 5 or 6 years looking at proposals by CEG regarding drainage and management of sewerage in Huntington.
- Raised concerns that Welsh Water had strongly objected to planning applications and then withdrawn their objections.
- Mr. Ackerley stated that Saughton Camp, Butterbache, Butterfield, Meadow Lane and Chester Road and all the road gullies are served by a 9inch pipe.
- He raised the question how is the sewerage from over 700 properties to be served by one 9 inch pipe not including the waste from shops, offices and businesses which are proposed.
- How was the existing network to accommodate increased flow without surcharging?
- It was noted that Welsh Water do clean up and disinfect after each flood however little or nothing has been done to resolve the problem.
- Why were no improvements being made to the existing network or a new sewer to being installed as part of the development of Saughton Camp?

The Chairman read the following questions:-

- In view of photographic evidence do you ignore the problems of residents, when your Managing Director states in writing (letter dated the 14th May 2012) that you take them seriously? Only 100 additional houses have been built at the moment and on 2 occasions this year 29th April and 5th August the road man-holes and gullies surcharged and did not allow the domestic properties sewage to enter the system. There are yet to be more than 600 properties on this site to be connected, plus Industrial/Office units.
- Saughton Camp development is connected to a pumping station by the Rake and Pikel PH which then pumps it into an 8” pipe across the A55 Bridge into the 9” sewer opposite Meadow Lane; can you clarify how this will work? The development will be allowed to pump 186 gallons a minute into this existing system. Surely a Duty of Care must be considered in this matter?

Mr. Hancock and Mr. Williams gave the following responses:-

- Welsh Water follows the same procedure when looking at a planning application whether it is for 1 house or 1000 by examining the existing assets in the area.
- Welsh water divide flooding into three categories:-
 1. Internal – flooding inside the house.
 2. Serious external – including in gardens
 3. Other – on highway
- Developers under the Town and Country Planning Act have the right to connect to the drains unless Welsh Water can clearly demonstrate harm to the network or to people.
- The sewerage system is built to handle a 1 in 30year storm; this is a maximum capacity and will not be able to accommodate some storms as they are beyond the design capacity. This capacity is true of both existing and new drains.
- When considering any application Welsh Water will look at previous flooding events in the area and can carryout a hydraulic model.
- Following the 2008 objection Welsh Water worked closely with CEG’s consultants using a hydraulic model examining existing connections to the network.
- It was stated that the majority of properties in the Butterbache area are on a separate sewerage system where foul sewerage and surface water are separate unlike on Chester Road.

- Mr. Williams described ‘urban creep’ where alteration to houses had led to surface water drains being added to foul sewers and also the impact of paving over garden areas to create additional parking spaces had on the capacity of existing drains.

It was asked when looking at the 2008 model what was the percentage utilisation of the drains.

- It was confirmed the model did not look at maximum capacity but rather identified existing flow rates and the additional rates.
- Developers have the right to connect into the sewerage network although they have no obligation to fix or improve existing problems with the network.

The following questions were raised:-

In your opinion is there a problem on Chester Road?

Would you install a 9” pipe if you were installing a new drain today?

System in Huntington is not working, Chester Road surface water needs separating from the drains.

- Yes there is flooding issues on Chester Road. A 9” pipe would be installed today but foul and surface water would be separated, a 9” foul only drain can accommodate 1000s of properties.
- Welsh Water had a programme called SWEAR (surface water elimination and removal) where areas of a high risk of flooding are identified and Welsh Water works with partners including the environment agency to remove surface water from the foul drains.
- It was noted there are no current plans to upgrade the network on Chester Road, however if there are some ‘quick fixes’ which can be achieved by removing some gullies from the network at a reasonable cost they will be looked into, particularly towards the bottom of Chester Road. This is something which would have to be done in partnership with CW&C highways.

Concerns were raised regarding the use of a 1 in 30 year capacity as flooding was a regular occurrence. If there is hydraulic constriction then there are a number of homes which are at risk of flooding. It was questioned just how much impact ‘urban creep’ is having as it only relates to a small number of properties especially when compared to the 100s of new dwellings which are proposed for Saughton Camp.

- Welsh Water have identified a large amount of surface water in the existing network this will be removed by a planning condition if the current Saughton Camp application is approved which will result in a better flow rate than the existing. Surface water from the highway in the development area will be removed from the system.

It was suggested it was madness to let properties flood before fixing the problem. It was asked why a more scientific approach wasn’t taken where flow rates could be precisely monitored and action taken at the appropriate time.

- It was emphasised that residents need to report flooding on the Welsh Water hotline as the more evidence that was available about flooding in the area the more likely that action would be taken.

It was asked why Chester City Council had not permitted the Caldly Valley development to connect to the Chester road network but now the Saughton Camp development was.

The Chairman read an e-mail from a resident of Bachefield Road who had lived in the property for 3 years and during that time had been affected by flooding on several occasions, the property had previously been owned by a grandparent for 50 years during that time the property had also been flooded. Although Welsh Water always efficiently cleans up after flooding the situation is not resolved. The resident expressed worries about the impact of the additional dwellings on Saughton Camp.

The Chairman read an e-mail from a resident of Meadow Lane who has requested a copy of the network diagram so that it the system could be understood.

The Chairman read an e-mail from a resident of Chester Road who highlighted seeing manhole covers on Chester Road surcharging during recent rain storms. He raised concerns about the smell of sewerage on Crown Fields and the impact of surface water going into Caldly Valley Brook in terms of flooding and the impact on the environment.

- Mr. Hancock confirmed he could not comment on the previous Caldly Valley applications.
- It was stated that remedial works on drains are carried out on a priority basis due to limited resources although 100s of repairs are carried out a year.
- In the last 5 or 10 years there has be more intense rainfalls however the 1 in 30 years standard is a nation wide industrial standard.

- Surveys are taking place on Chester Road and Bachefield to investigate flooding. It was noted there was an issue with people putting fat, nappies and socks among other things into the drains which cause blockages.
- Run off surface water going into the Brook would be controlled through a sustainable system including swales as a result water flow would be no greater than off a green field, the system seeks to replicate flows from the natural environment.

It was asked why Welsh Water on both occasions have objected to planning application on Saughton Camp using the same letter and then withdrawn their objection.

- It was explained that Welsh Water receive notice of the planning application from CW&C with little or no information about the application as a result they send a standard objection letter. This letter then triggers the developer or its consultants to work with Welsh Water to provide more information etc if satisfied with this information the objection will be withdrawn although conditions maybe applied.

It was noted that the dwelling at Oakfield Nurseries has been flooded internally on a number of occasions.

- Again residents were asked to report instances of flooding as these are all recorded and help form the basis of the 5 year business programme, also 'TRIGGER' areas can be identified which are treated as a priority due to previous instances of flooding.
- It was noted that the drains in that area had been investigated and there were a large amount of tree roots in the sewers there.

It was noted that the Caldy Valley Area had a separate foul and sewerage system yet still suffers flooding, it is not easy to accept this is just caused by 'urban creep'.

- As a result of conversation tonight it seems likely there is a localised problem with the pumping station on Chester Road as it is only the manhole near the station that is surcharging, if it was a wider problem this would not be the case, as result the capacity and performance of the pumping station will be investigated.
- Mr. Williams agreed he would forward a copy of the network to the council.

It was stated that the exceptional storm which took place on the 5th August 2012 is a 'red herring' as this wasn't the first time there has been flooding in Huntington. The flooding due to the proximity of the foul drains to the Brook means raw sewerage enters the Brook which then flows directly into the River Dee. When the area is cleaned the waste is just washed from the Caldy Valley paths into the undergrowth which is not satisfactory.

Deep concern was expressed about the flooding on Chester Road which was unacceptable having happened twice in the last 8 months alone, planning conditions including swales and ponds could actually worsen the situation and the developer already has a bad track record of actions and adhering to conditions.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Residents asked the following questions:-

A resident of Meadow Lane as why the pumping station at the Rake and Pikel didn't automatically stop pumping waste during periods of heavy rain which would prevent surcharging in Meadow Lane. He highlighted the smell which is about for around 15 minutes every time the pumping station starts pumping. It was stated that the pumps have a start/stop level and that more waste could be stored before pumping during heavy rain.

- It was noted that conditions on the current application would reduce flow rates significantly compared to current rates.

A resident of Bachefield Road stated they had had flooding four times already this year and that the actions taken by Welsh Water were purely 'sticking plasters' which were not solving the problem. He also raised concerns that as an individual reporting flooding he was just one person and that this was never likely to raise the priority of the problem while large numbers of residents report flooding in public areas like Caldy Valley Nature Park.

- Mr. Williams confirmed he would go away and look into the situation and carryout further work in Bachefield Road to identify the problem.

A resident of Chester Road highlighted in the current planning application goes ahead for Saughton Camp it will be 10 years before it is completed and that Welsh Water needs to take action now to resolve these issues now.

- It was noted that these conditions did not relate to the phases under construction and that conditions could not be imposed retrospectively but that if phase two is approved these conditions will have to be discharged before the new properties can be connected to the drains network.

The number to report flooding and drainage issues is **08000 85 39 68**.

SAUGHTON CAMP/HIGHWAYS DEVELOPMENT

The Chairman reported that Great Boughton Parish Council would be holding a meeting in November relating to the Sainsbury's junction so that any questions relating to the roundabout would be forwarded to that meeting.

The Chairman introduced John Evans, Cheshire West and Chester Highways Development Engineer who was attending on behalf of Paul Parry who was unable to attend having suffered a serious injury over the weekend. Mr. Evans gave a short presentation including the following information:-

- CW&C continue to receive large amounts of information and questions related to the Sainsbury's junction and other works from Huntington and the surrounding area.
- Major construction works took place between May and December 2011 which were followed by a safety audit the findings and recommendations of which were reported back to the developer.
- February 2012 – these works were declared substantially complete based on approved plans conditioned as part of the Phase A Saughton Camp development. This is a standard agreement and was compared to a house which is built and therefore substantially complete but may not be decorated and habitable.
- The majority of remedial work is now done including new signs and surfacing.
- It should be noted that these remedial works in CW&C's mind were never likely to resolve the congestion issues and the junction is still not regarded as operationally acceptable by CW&C highways dept.
- The developer's traffic signal engineers are currently working on rephrasing the traffic lights on the junction. This is seen as the last action the developer can take to improve the congestion. It was noted that the developer is not willing to carry out any other works that might improve the junction until the work has been done on the phasing.
- Some of the suggestions being considered by highways to improve the junction if the new phasing does not improve the situation are:-
 - Longer 2 lane approach from the A41
 - Free flow left turn coming from Chester.
 - Free flow left turn towards Whitchurch.
- Outstanding issues in Huntington include the poor state of the verges and missing signage. It was noted the Huntington Sign has been replaced (in a different place) and that landscaping is to take place on the verges, and that a date would be set for one or two representatives from the PC to meet the landscaper and highways department to sign off the work done on the verges as being at an acceptable standard.
- It was noted that all works including investigations into improvements were being funded by CEG, and that CW&C highways are continuing to pressure the developer for improvements with the help of the public's comments.
- Mr. Evans confirmed he and his colleague are still responding directly to a large number of residents on these matters.
- It was confirmed that until the gas works are completed in Chester it is not possible to measure traffic movement and the true impact of the junction, once the gas works are completed towards the end of October these measurements can be taken and then CW&C will need to prove if 'nil detriment' has not been achieved by the junction, if that is the case the junction will have failed and the condition of the planning approval will not have been met.

- It was noted that a separate meeting should be arranged with representatives of the council to go through the outstanding snagging list.

Concerns were raised regarding conditions restricting HGV movements on the development site. It was noted that the haul road which has been constructed should allow to HGV vehicles queue up to go into the site without blocking the highways. It was noted that there are no conditions on vehicle movements into the Taylor Wimpey site (Crown Fields).

It was noted that the road sweeper is parking at the entrance to Walkers' Nurseries blocking visibility.

John Salt, Chairman of Great Boughton Parish Council confirmed Great Boughton Parish Council will be holding a meeting to look at the Sainsbury's junction and invited residents of Huntington to attend the meeting and join the debate.

The following two issues were raised a written response requested:-

Congestion is not the only issue with Sainsbury's junction there is basic safety issue as the junction is too small to accommodate 5 major access roads, highways officers were asked to comment on this matter. Why or how was the roundabout agreed by CW&C when the council's own engineers objected to it?

The Chairman read an update received from Charles Johnson of CEG. (pages 249 & 250 of the minutes book.)

The Chairman read an e-mail from Nial Casselden, CW&C Enforcement officer which stated that enforcement are in regular contact with the site managers to reduce the impact of the development where possible, although officers cannot monitor all the time so they welcome reports from residents.

The Case officer is Keith Sharp who speaks to the site manager several times a week. Vehicles entering and exiting the site are now logged and this log is inspected once a fortnight.

The response stated that if the Council wished to keep a vehicle count that information might prove helpful however only HGV movements on the Bovis/Redrow site should be included.

At present officers are satisfied the traffic management plan is being adhered to.

Officers have spoken to the site manager on several occasions about vehicles parking on Cheshire's Way blocking access however as this is not an adopted road parking restrictions cannot be enforced, however vehicles should not be loading or unloading there and incidences of this should be reported.

It was reported that parking for the show homes is inadequate particularly at weekends; this matter will be raised with enforcement to look into.

12/228 RESOLVED – That Cllr. Jacky Creswick speak on behalf of the Council at strategic planning on Thursday 20th August against application 12/01754/OUT – Saughton Camp development.

It was noted that Cheshire Association of Local Councils had sent round a survey relating to the local plan it was agreed the clerk should contact Chalc and ask for a delay in the response deadline so that the council could develop an informed response.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The following items were raised under public participation:-

A resident raised concerns about overgrown footpaths in the Huntington area.

Concerns were raised that the three mounded grass verges after High Bank travelling away from Chester were still not getting cut.

These issues will be raised with Streetscene.

A query was raised regarding when the planters were to be planted. It was confirmed this would be taking place later in the week by Walker's Nursery who had been waiting for the autumn plants.

Concerns were raised regarding the cancellation of the August extraordinary meeting; concerns were also raised regarding the last newsletter and the information which had been included that the Saughton Camp application would be considered by CW&C in October, which had been the understanding when the newsletter went to print.

A vote of no confidence in the Chairman was proposed and seconded but was defeated.

SAIGHTON CAMP MONUMENT/FEATURE

The Clerk reported she had been contacted by Barry Herrod, Bovis Homes regarding moving forward on the public art feature on Saughton Camp. It was agreed that a monument should be erected reflecting the camps military history where wreaths could be laid on remembrance day but should also recognise those soldiers and civilians who have served there and are still living. It was agreed the clerk should contact the Cheshire Military Museum for their advice. The following wording was suggested by Mrs, Bonner (resident):-

“The tablet/plaque is dedicated to the countless thousands of Military and Civilian Personnel who served at Saughton Camp during times of National Emergencies 1939 to 2000.”(dates to be confirmed)

CHESTER ROAD VERGES

The clerk reported CW&C highways had received two objections regarding the implementation of a no parking on verges and footways on Chester Road, both objections commented on the need for vehicles to park off the road for safety reasons. The Council agreed to continue to support the implementation of this traffic order.

BUS SERVICE

The clerk reported she had been contacted by the First Bus area manager who had asked to come to speak to the council at the October meeting about concerns raised at previous meetings regarding the bus service in Huntington and the complexity of the bus timetable. Councillors were asked to forward any questions or areas they would like him to cover in advance of the meeting so that he could be made aware of these issues.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The clerk reported that the council was not permitted to alter the code of conduct to allow councillors with a pecuniary interest to speak during the public participation agenda item as had been the case under the previous code when councillors had declared a prejudicial interest.

It was noted that this may mean the Council’s standing orders also required changing; the clerk will investigate this matter.

CW&C LOCAL PLAN

It was agreed a working group would be formed to consider the proposals contained in the Preferred Policy Options document, councillors were given the following sections to work on although all were asked to read the vision and objectives strategy.

Mark Williams – Spatial Strategy
Roy Shelton – Economic
Martin Kemp – Social
Jacky Creswick – Environment

TPO UPDATE

The clerk read an e-mail from Peter Dornig, CW&C tree warden, which stated that even if the trees were proved to belong to the Parish Council the fact that they are on highways land meant they could still be removed for highways safety or planning reasons even with a TPO on them.

The clerk further reported that she had been unable to access the council’s minutes as the archives are currently in the process of relocating, these will be available again from October.

It was considered in light of the e-mail if the council should continue to pursue this matter, it was agreed the matter would be revisited at the October council meeting.

JUBILEE FIELD

Cllr. Kemp declared a prejudicial interest in relation to the purchase of a new sign for the Jubilee Field as his company had provided a quote; he then left the meeting and took no part in the following discussion.

12/229 RESOLVED – That the council obtain the new sign from Red Wood Signs.

It was agreed that the clerk would circulate the proposed sign design for councillors to comment on before the order is confirmed.

It was reported that the deeds had now been sent for signing to dedicate the Jubilee Playing Field as a Queen Elizabeth 2 field which will protect it as a playing field for perpetuity. The deeds which had been circulated to councillors currently show the wrong address this can only be corrected once the registration documents are update at the land registry.

12/230 RESOLVED – That the chairman sign the deed to dedicate the Jubilee Field as a Queen Elizabeth 2 field.

The clerk reported she had applied for a grant of £20,000 to complete the footpath around the field.

It was noted that a recycling bin had now been installed on the Jubilee Field by CW&C.

Councillors were asked to consider whether it was necessary to plant the hedge along the car park fence.

Concerns were raised regarding blocking the access under the car park fence which leads into the playing field, this had been discussed previously and the clerk will chase up. It was noted that the new sign will highlight the existence of the swales area.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The clerk read an e-mail from Great Boughton Parish Council stating they had decided at their July meeting not to proceed with a neighbourhood plan at this time. It was agreed that due to uncertainty about the cost and benefits of producing a plan at this time Huntington would put on hold producing a neighbourhood plan but would revisit this decision at the Council March 2013 meeting.

PLANNING

The Council agreed the contents of the planning register page 58 as circulated noting application 12/03697/HED had been incorrectly issued as the removal of the hedge had been approved as part of a previous application.

ACCOUNTS & PAYMENTS

12/231 RESOLVED – That the Council agreed the accounts as circulated on page 61 of the Cash Book, confirming all payments which have been made to date.

12/232 RESOLVED – That the Council reimburse the clerk £125.53 for back pay and printer toner.

WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme was noted as circulated with councillors agreeing to forward any comments or questions to the clerk after the meeting.

Concerns were raised about the existing website, the clerk reported she had asked for quotes from a number of people to replace the website but was struggling to get quotes back. It was agreed that the website working group would meet to discuss this again in more detail before the Council’s October meeting, it was agreed Darren Johnson (resident) would join the working group.

It was agreed the clerk would circulate a date for councillors to meet up to remove the grass from around the Chester Road trees and to check the condition of the trees including their stakes and cages.

The meeting closed at 10.35pm.

The NEXT meeting of the Parish Council Meeting is Monday 15th October 2012.

Signed

Dated

Ann Wright 20th September 2012

COMMERCIAL ESTATES GROUP

20th August 2012

Huntington Parish Council
c/o Ann Wright
Clerk to Huntington Parish Council
62 Well Street
Malpas
Cheshire
SY14 8QY

Dear Councillors,

Re: Boughton Heath Roundabout

Further to the cancellation of the forthcoming meeting to discuss Saighton Camp and Boughton Heath Roundabout, I thought it would be useful to provide an update regarding the additional work contractors have been undertaking at the new junction.

In addition, I wanted to confirm that we have been liaising with Helen Carey of PROUD and in June offered to meet with the group to discuss their concerns, to date we have not received confirmation regarding when they would like to meet with CEG.

As you are aware the works to signalise Boughton Heath Roundabout completed earlier this year. As with all new major transport improvements however, there is a period of testing following their completion, which enables the performance of the works to be reviewed. In the case of Boughton Heath Roundabout, this review period identified a number of additional signage and remedial works which have now been completed. In addition, further work has been taking place in conjunction with the local authority on improvements to the sequencing of the traffic signals.

During the week commencing 20th August, alternative phasing tests are being carried out on the signals using a 'fixed-time plan' method. Once satisfied this will deliver the predicted improvements, changes will be made to the controller chip. Thereafter, the more intelligent method of control (SCOOT) will begin to implement the new phasing during week commencing 17th September.

Surfacing remedial works were completed on the 6th August. This work was required by Chester West and Chester Council due to the fact that a batch of tarmac delivered to site unfortunately had some defects. In addition, some small remedial works are still on-going to complete CW&C Council's snagging list. A meeting is being held this week with Council Officers to review these works, as well as the additional signing and road markings which were picked up through the Safety Audit Works and subsequently implemented last month in order to improve lane discipline.

Cont/

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I hope that provides an update and I am more than happy to provide further clarification if required if there are any further questions from the Parish Council or its constituents. If you would like to provide feedback regarding the additional signage and road markings as well as your views regarding the new phasing (fixed until 17th September and thereafter using the intelligent signals method) that would be appreciated.

Yours sincerely,



Charles Johnson
Charles.johnson@ceg.co.uk