

HAWARDEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the MEETING of the STAFF AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held on 8 JUNE 2015

PRESENT: Chair: Councillor Joyce Angell
Vice-Chair: Councillor Cheryl Carver

Councillors: As per Council Meeting

Officers: Mr R N Barnes, Clerk & Financial Officer

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

As per Council meeting

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015/2016:

Councillor Cheryl Carver nominated Councillor Joyce Angell. This was seconded by Councillor George Hardcastle. There being no other nominations and on being put to a vote Councillor Joyce Angell was appointed Chair of Committee for the Municipal Year.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

There were none

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:

IT WAS RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 13 April 2015, be received as a true record and that they be signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

Council Chamber

The Clerk advised that as yet there had been no reply received from the Hawarden Institute Management Committee. Councillor Clive Carver who Chaired the Institute Management Committee apologised for not having replied but indicated that the Management Committee wished to see a scaled plan of the proposed alterations.

Facebook

The Clerk confirmed that Councillor Preece had set up the Council's Facebook page and that it included information in connection with the Community in Bloom competition and the Hawarden Carnival.

Grounds Maintenance Staff

The Clerk confirmed that Mr Len Whitney had been appointed on a six month contract principally to undertake the cutting of the Council's play areas and playing fields using the tractor pulled rotary mower.

The Clerk further confirmed that Messrs Robin Davies and Sean Williams had been engaged by the Council as voluntary workers on a four day week basis. He confirmed that all three gentlemen were proving to be great assets to the workforce and that the appearance of the Council's facilities was improved as a result.

POLICE MATTERS:

The Chair welcomed PC Martin Price to the meeting and invited Members to raise any relevant matters with the Officer. The following matters were raised:-

- Councillor George Hardcastle sought information on recent break ins on Old Aston Hill. PC Price said that he was aware of the break ins but did not have any detail on the actual properties concerned.
- Councillor Alison Halford raised the issue of vehicles parking on The Highway, Hawarden opposite the junction to Groomsdale Lane, which caused problems for motorists exiting Groomsdale Lane who were faced by traffic on the wrong side of the road as a result.
- Councillor Ralph Small referred to the practice of residents parking their vehicles on the corner of Mancot Lane opposite the White Bear Public House. He said that the number of vehicles parking there seemed to have increased and to exacerbate the matter vehicles were also parking in the Cottage Lane junction opposite. Councillor Glenys Diskin said that she had raised this matter with Mike Eastwood the County's Highways Supervisor and that a site meeting was shortly to be held with the intention of seeking the provision of road markings at this location.
- Councillor George Hardcastle referred to a meeting which Members of the County Council would shortly be having with Mr Winston Roddick the North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner. Councillor Hardcastle asked whether there were any concerns which PC Price might have with regard to manpower which he would wish Councillor Hardcastle to raise anonymously. PC Price referred to additional Officers who had recently been recruited and said that Mr Roddick was aware of and helpful with the need to employ additional Officers.

PC Price advised the Committee that the Police had successfully arrested two individuals in connection with a spate of shoplifting at the Co-op in Ewloe and the Co-op in Pentre. The two individuals came from the Merseyside area and had admitted to between 30 and 40 offences.

The Chair thanked PC Price for his attendance at the meeting.

HIGHWAY AND CAR PARKING ISSUES IN HAWARDEN:

The Chair welcomed Mr Steve Jones, Chief Officer (Streetscene & Transportation) to the meeting and invited him to address the Committee.

Mr Jones said that he wished to apologise unreservedly to the Council for the response to its letter dated 19 February 2015 from an Officer in his department. He said that the response simply wasn't good enough and that it went against the concept of his service i.e. the provision of a co-ordinated response to highway and traffic issues.

Prior to responding to the issues raised in the Council's letter Mr Jones informed the Council that there was an ongoing review of Highways Supervisors and their co-ordinators. He said that in future the Council would have one point of contact for maintenance and one for strategic matters who would be the supervisor's manager. He said that the Highway Supervisors would be tasked to attend meetings of Town and Community Councils at the frequencies which the Councils required. He said that he was hopeful that the new supervisor for the Hawarden Community Council area would be in post shortly and be available to attend the Council's July meeting if required.

Mr Jones then responded to the issues raised by the Council in its letter dated 19 February 2015. Mr Jones said that with regard to the three matters raised in connection with parking restrictions these would be placed on a list of Flintshire's consideration and that each one would be ranked and scored in accordance with a number of factors including accident statistics, proximity to schools and other institutions and support from the local Community Council and local County Member. He said it was likely that the one relating to Cross Tree Lane School would score higher.

With regard to the issue of increasing the area of the Tinkersdale car park by removing the recycling bins and re-lining the car park, Mr Jones said that it was not possible to remove the recycling bins as there were ongoing contracts with recycling companies. However he undertook to have the older recycling bins replaced and the area tidied. With regard to the re-lining of the car park he said that he would have the area re-evaluated to ascertain whether it could be re-lined to provide additional parking spaces. He noted that Members had concern that should the car park be re-lined to accommodate additional vehicles it could go beyond the threshold requiring car parking charges to be levied. He gave an assurance that this would not happen. Mr Jones further noted that the car park was full at peak times.

With regard to the request for residents only parking in Mossley Court Mr Jones said that residents parking was at present being piloted in Mold, where due to the likely displacement of cars from car parks which would in the future levy charges residents only parking would become necessary. Mr Jones confirmed that a list of areas suitable for residents only parking existed and that Mossley Court would be on such a list and would have been given a ranking.

With regard to the suggestion to widen the parking bays outside the Sheltered Housing units on The Highway to enable vehicles to park at right angles to the road and thereby increase the number of vehicle places, Mr Jones said that this might cause a hazard in relation to vehicles reversing out onto The Highway.

Councillor Williams suggested that the spaces could be lined such that vehicles were parked at forty five degree angle to the road and that their movements would be no more hazardous than at present. Mr Jones agreed to look into this further.

Bollards outside Hawarden Post Office – Mr Jones said that these would be installed during the course of the week.

Long Vehicle Signs – Tinkersdale Road. Mr Jones acknowledged the various points made by Members concerning the problems caused by long vehicles trying to negotiate the Glynne Way junction and undertook to have a modelling exercise carried out to ascertain whether any alterations to the junction were required or whether signing could be supported. Mr Jones also agreed to give consideration to the replacement of the railings outside the former HSBC Bank which had been damaged as a result of the problem discussed.

Councillor Ralph Small raised the issue of vehicles parking on the Mancot Lane bend opposite the White Bear Public House and into the junction with Cottage Lane and described the difficulties which were being caused. It was noted that a site meeting involving the local Highways Supervisor was shortly to be held to discuss this matter in order to seek a resolution to it.

The Chair thanked Mr Jones for his attendance at the meeting.

COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER:

The Chair reminded the Committee that it had been resolved on 13 April that with regard to library provision in Hawarden and Mancot that the Council would await the County Council's policy decisions. The Committee was further advised that on 19 April Flintshire County Council's Cabinet had agreed with the recommendation to close Hawarden, Mancot and Queensferry Libraries and to replace them with a hub library at Deeside Leisure Centre. However this decision had been called in by local County Councillors and had been further discussed at a meeting of the Organisational Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee at a meeting held earlier in the day. The meeting had been attended by local County Councillors and the Chair of the Community Council who were invited to update the Committee on the outcome of the deliberations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Clive Carver advised that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had resolved by a majority of 6 to 4 with 2 abstentions that it was satisfied with the decision of the Cabinet to close the libraries at Hawarden, Mancot and Queensferry and to replace them with a new hub library based at Deeside Leisure Centre.

Councillor Glenys Diskin said that in anticipation of the decision a meeting had been arranged by interested parties in Mancot with Ian Bancroft to discuss the proposition of a community library in Mancot to fill the void created by the closure of the present library.

Councillor Clive Carver intimated that there was no suitable building in Hawarden for a community library citing the comment contained in the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the Hawarden Record Office was not expected to be retained by Flintshire County Council because of its unsuitability.

Councillor David Mackie expressed his concern about the viability of community libraries citing that communities would have to have their own buildings, books, computers, internet access and staff. He said that there would be no assistance given by the County Council.

It was noted that Flintshire County Council had given an undertaking to work with the communities of Hawarden and Mancot specifically to plan community library services for each of the areas. Consequently IT WAS RESOLVED: to invite Mr Ian Bancroft, Chief Officer for Organisational Change to a special meeting of the Council to further discuss the provision of community library services.

CLERK'S REPORT:

The Clerk advised that there were no matters which he wished to draw to the Committee's attention.

MEMBERS' INFORMATION ITEMS:

There were none.