

**TATTENHALL & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL**

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21<sup>st</sup> November 2017

**Fencing Park School, Position Statement**

In May 2017, when tasked by members of the community to seek engagement with The Park School Governing Board, the Parish Council had hoped that consultation with the community would be forthcoming even though the Board had already announced that a fence would be constructed around the perimeter of the school property.

In June 2017, consultation was agreed at a meeting facilitated by CWaC; a joint statement was issued and Action Notes agreed. The action notes stated that questions for the drop-in consultation were "... to be agreed by the group (PC/School/Governors/[Ward Councillor])". However, two days before the consultation was due to take place the Parish Council was informed by the Senior Manager, Education Infrastructure Education Service, CWaC, that the consultation would "now" be limited to "Style of the fence – in terms of colour/type and access outside of school hours – use/management". No questions from the Parish Council were allowed.

The Parish Council deeply regrets that the School Governing Board had no intention to consult the community prior to making a decision to fencing the perimeter of the school with a 1.8 metre fence. The Parish Council considers that the consultation, requested by the community after the decision to install the fence, to have been flawed and not consistent with the agreement at the CWaC facilitated meeting.

While perimeter fencing up to 1.8 metre height is allowed without planning permission there is an obligation on School Governors, as required by the Code of Conduct for School Governing Boards, that the Board "... will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools". The Parish Council considers that, in not appropriately consulting the community, this obligation has not been met.

The Code of Conduct also requires that the Board "... will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this". The refusal of the Board to consult over legitimate questions has damaged the reputation of the school in the local community.

Events leading up to the failed consultation are documented in the Appendices to this statement.

*Jean Dutton*  
Clerk to the Council

## APPENDIX 1

The Parish Council was first made aware of the intention to fence the School perimeter in January 2017. The Parish Council Chairman wrote to the School Governing Board on 17th January 2017 requesting, on behalf of the community, early consultation in their decision making. No response to the request was received.

The School Governing Board, on 25th May 2017, issued a statement that a 1.8 metre green wire mesh fence would be erected around the perimeter of the school property.

At the Annual Parish Meeting on 25th May 2017, the electors present unanimously resolved that the Chairman should request community engagement with the school Governing Board concerning the intention to fence the perimeter, to be facilitated by officers of Cheshire West and Chester Council. The request was accepted and a meeting was arranged by the Senior Localities (Rural) Officer, CWaC for 26th June 2017. The Parish Council Chairman requested two parish councillors, one local resident and the Ward Councillor to represent the Community. The presence of a local resident was refused. The requested scope for consultation, which was accepted, was:

### **Physical properties of the fence:**

siting

style

height

### **Impact on properties backing onto the Park:**

Rookery Drive

Oaklands Avenue

Boundary agreements

### **Risk management:**

justification Statement

residual risk of a fence

disbenefits

### **How best to deal with dog fouling on the whole park**

### **Access out of school hours**

At the meeting, the community representatives accepted that under Permitted Development Order rights the fence would be erected but a drop-in event would be arranged as consultation concerning other aspects, the questions to be decided jointly.

The agreed Action Notes (see Appendix 2) were received on 28th June 2016. The Action points have not been fully met. Points 1 and 2 have not been completed by Carol Davis, CWaC Education Infrastructure. Point 3 was answered - the minimum recommended area for a 1.5FE school is 14,343sqm and the fence will enclose 17,514sqm of a total 18,945sqm of open playing area designated as educational land. Point 4 has not been answered by Sarah Dobbins. Points 5 and 8 have been completed; Point 7 has been partially completed but point 6 has not. An agreed statement following the meeting was publicised on 4th July 2017 (see Appendix 3).

Following the release of the Consultation date, 24th July 2017, the Parish Council Chairman asked the Senior Localities Manager, CWaC, on 18th July 2017 what the process would be to decide the questions for the consultation. Without any reference to community representatives, draft consultation questions were issued on 20th July 2017 leaving just over one working day to contribute questions. On 23rd July 2017, less than 12hrs before the drop-in consultation, the final questions were issued which did not include any questions submitted by the Parish Council.

The drop-in consultation opened at 9 am on 24th July 2017. The analysis of the results has not to date been published.

APPENDIX 2

ACTION NOTES 28th June 2017

	Action	Owner
1	Clarify the ownership of the land surrounding the school	Carolyn Davis
2	Confirm if the disposal policy is required for the school to fence the field	Carolyn Davis
3	Confirm the minimum amount of land/ outdoor play space that is required for a primary school	Carolyn Davis
4	Explore if all of the land (including PC leased land) can be covered by a dog protection order/by-law to restrict dogs	Sarah Dobbins
5	Share the risk assessment documents with Cllr Jones	Jo Hawkins
6	Conduct community consultation to seek community views on a range of points.  Questions to be agreed by the group (PC/School/Governors/Member)	Pam Bradley/Sarah Dobbins
7	All communications associated with the fence to be discussed as a group to issue joint statements.	All
8	A statement regarding the outcome of the meeting on 26 <sup>th</sup> June to be prepared.	Pam Bradley

**TATTENHALL STATEMENT**

On Monday, 26 June representatives from Tattenhall & District Parish Council, Tattenhall Park Primary School and Cheshire West and Chester Council (ward member and officers) met to discuss a direction for future working arrangements regarding the introduction of a perimeter fence around the school.

Following the meeting, which was successful, it was agreed that the Parish Council and Primary School would work together to shape a local consultation about the introduction of the perimeter fence and access.

The consultation will be conducted by Cheshire West and Chester Council and will be promoted by the Primary School and Parish Council.

**Ends**

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