

Witchford Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 3rd January 2007, at 7.30 pm in St. Andrews Hall.

Present

Mr M Flack-Crane (in the chair)
Mr I Allen
Mr B Colling
Mr G Jellicoe
Mr C D'Cunha
Mr G Barber
Mr N Holdsworth
Mr J Carter

Apologies: Mrs S Bromley-Allen, Mr I Brand, Mrs T Harding, District Councillor P Wilson

In attendance: District Councillors G Wilson, County Councillor Hunt

- 255 The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6th December 2006 were taken as read, approved with the exception of the replacement of £300 with £3000 in minute 222, and signed by the Chairman.
- 256 A letter was noted from Anglian Water regarding flooding problem. They state that rain water is entering the foul sewer and this seems to be originating from the Bedwell Hey Mobile Home Park and discharging into a manhole at 55/61 Main Street. They also state that a recently installed road gully has been connected into the foul sewer adjacent to 55 and 57 Main Street and that there is a storm pipe on the opposite side of Main Street which connection needs to be removed. They say that their sewerage systems are designed for a one in 30 year storm event and that Met office reports suggest this rainfall has occurred on several occasions during July and August 2006 therefore causing surcharging. They say they that although they have no mandatory powers of enforcement to stop this rain water from entering the drainage system, they could write to all parties. It was agreed to pass the information to the Environmental Heath Officer at East Cambridgeshire District Council and also to write to Anglian Water expressing disappointment with their response, saying that they should be writing to owners of property reminding them of their obligations. As a result of procedures not being followed, properties are being flooded and they are allowing connections to their system to be made without permission which sets precedents for the future.
- 257 An invitation was noted to the Cambridgeshire Rural Community Question Time on 8th February 2007.
- 258 Information was noted from the County Council regarding temporary signs for community or charity events. Their new policy is that their staff will exercise discretion when temporary signs are erected for charity events provided that they do not cause a hazard and are erected well away from junctions and accesses. Signs should not exceed 0.5 sq metres, should not be erected more than 7 days before an event or remain in place for more than 48 hours afterwards and normally no more than 3 signs should be erected per event. Organisers should inform their local highways divisional office at least 2 weeks before erecting any temporary signs.
- 259 A letter was noted from the County Council regarding the contracted Burtons bus Service 19 running through Witchford on Sundays and Bank Holidays which will stop from the beginning of April 2007. Any comments on this should be sent to Passenger Transport at the County Council.

- 260 A resident had requested a visibility mirror for pedestrians at Grunty Fen corner, the main problem being when crossing from west to east. The County Council have advised that it is not permitted to erect mirrors on the public highway. However, if permission were to be obtained from a private landowner upon whose property the mirror could be located (off the highway) then there is no action they could take. It was thought that no suitable location would be available.
- 261 Information on winter gritting and snow clearing was noted.
- 262 A letter was noted from the Ely and District Citizens Advice Bureau asking for a donation. It was proposed by Councillor Allen, seconded by Councillor D'Cunha that a donation of £200 be made.
- 263 Information had been received from the District Council that negotiations with Taylor Woodrow are progressing and that they anticipate their negotiations reaching a resolution in the early part of the New Year. They undertake to inform the Parish Council once this has taken place. The clerk was asked to query the specification for the fence erected around the playpark which councillors do not consider is of an acceptable quality.
- 264 Information on the County Council Budget for 2007/08 was noted. There will be a surgery regarding this in Ely Library on 13th January between 2.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m.
- 265 **Report from County Councillor:** Councillor Hunt explained that although he supports the development of a household waste centre on site 37, he shares concerns about any proposal for a bulk waste transfer system on the site. His understanding of the situation is that Donabon will be confirmed as the contractors by March. He explained that cuts to the local bus service were necessitated by an overspend on areas of County Council expenditure. He will endeavour to arrange a meeting with the County Council regarding the re-designation of Sandpit Lane – this is likely to be at March and will be attended by Councillors Hunt, Jellicoe and the clerk.
- 266 **Reports by District Councillors** – Councillor G Wilson explained that once the Victoria Green area had been adopted by East Cambridgeshire District Council, this could then be passed to the Parish Council. Members were of the view that a large financial package would be necessary to encourage the Parish Council to wish to take this on. Councillor Wilson stated that at a recent planning meeting, Pecks were given consent to move to Lancaster Way. He also advised of certain personnel changes within the District Council and stated that Cambridgeshire Horizons would be asked for funding towards an Ely Country Park and other leisure facilities within Ely. It is possible that a planning delivery grant may be obtained by the District Council but this will not be known until June.
- 267 Councillor Allen in answer to a question, indicated that the District Council has no responsibility for commercial waste which is a commercial market operating under Government rules. Councillor Allen advised of his discussions with the Strategic Development Committee of the District Council which, when replying to consultations on the proposed household waste centre, changed its view to reflect the views of the Parish Council.
- 268 **Planning** – the planning notes which had been circulated were noted.
- 269 The occupier of 132 Main Street had advised the clerk that he had received permission to take down the diseased horse chestnut tree outside the property. A report on the condition of the tree from Acacia Tree Surgery was noted with regret.
- 270 It was agreed to set a date for staff appraisals in February 2007.
- 271 A report from the East Cambridgeshire Independent Remuneration Panel was noted whereby Parishes could opt to set up arrangements for paying allowances to their councillors. It was agreed that Witchford Parish Council does not wish to enter into this scheme.

- 272 Complaints had been received from residents regarding a vehicle parking in Manor Court Road which was thought to present a danger to other road users. This matter will be referred to the Police. There have also been complaints regarding vehicles parking on the Hereward track at the rear of the common in Common Road. This matter will be referred to Hereward Housing.
- 273 The application forms for the Parish Paths Partnership has been received and these will be completed by Councillor Jellicoe and the clerk.
- 274 One tender was received for the grass cutting in the village for the three years from April 2007. It was proposed by Councillor D’Cunha, seconded by Councillor Barber that the tender from Truelink Limited be accepted.
- 275 Councillor Jellicoe advised on his progress with the registration of parish land. It was agreed that he would go forward with registration of common land in Common Road and Sandpit Drove, the Millennium Wood, the Old Recreation Ground and Old Scenes. The Parish Council would write to adjoining landowners advising them of this.
- 276 Councillor Barber had prepared a report on the condition of bus shelters in the village and it was agreed that tenders would be prepared for the necessary repair work on these and treatment of the public seats in the village. It was agreed to contact Alan Richardson, FCB and Ian Collins with tender documents to be returned in sealed envelopes for the meeting on 7th February 2007.
- 277 Councillor Flack-Crane had attended a meeting of Ely City Council prior to their submission of comments on the Cambridgeshire Waste and Mineral Plan. The Witchford Parish Council consultation document had been received on time and had been acknowledged.

Councillor Reports

- 278 **Street Lighting** – nothing to report.
- 279 **Play equipment** – nothing to report.
- 280 **Grass cutting** – already reported.
- 281 **Open Spaces** – There will be an “opening” of the new bridge on footpath 1 (Toad Corner) by the Chairman of the Parish Council at 11.00 a.m. on 6th January 2007 and all villagers will be welcome.
- 282 **Wood** – hay has been removed.
- 283 **Youth** – a booklet “in search of ourselves” produced by the Witchford Patch Traveller Youth Group was noted.
- 284 **Community** – nothing to report.
- 285 **Finance:** It was proposed by Councillor Holdsworth, seconded by Councillor D’Cunha that the bank reconciliation and the cheques detailed on the cheque schedule be approved.
- 286 Date of next meeting. Wednesday 7th February 2007

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.04 p.m.

Signed: Chairman

Date: