

Witchford Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs S M Monteith, 174 Main Street, Witchford Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB6 2HT
Telephone 01353 665707
witchfordparishcouncil@eastcamb.gov.uk

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 7th February 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 G Barber
Mrs T Harding
Mrs S Bromley-Allen
Mr I Brand
Mr N Holdsworth

Apologies: Mr C D’Cunha, Mr J Carter

In attendance: District Councillors G Wilson and P Wilson, County Councillor Hunt

- 287 The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3rd January 2007 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman.
- 288 The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority Precept 2007/08 was noted.
- 289 The specification for the fence around the playpark in Victoria Green had been received from the District Council. It was agreed that if and when negotiations take place between the Parish Council and District Council regarding the adoption of Victoria Green, then the Parish Council should consult with Ely City Council regarding their experiences in taking over such areas from the District Council.
- 290 Anglian Water had written suggesting a meeting to attempt to resolve flooding problems in Witchford. The clerk will arrange this meeting to include Councillors Allen and Carter and a representative of the Environmental Health Department of East Cambridgeshire District Council.
- 291 Proposed changes to the East of England Plan from Go-East were noted. The notes on the proposed changes prepared by the County Council were also noted. It was pointed out that the 1700 houses that East Cambridgeshire District Council calculate can be built on windfall sites, can no longer count as part of the housing growth planned for the district.
- 292 Rackham School had written requesting funding of £220 for a new road sign for the school as visitors have difficulties in locating the school. The Police had recommended the school should have an additional parking bay marked out just for the school bus on the end of the existing zig-zags in front of the recently built school extension but before the new houses not yet occupied on Main Street. The Parish Council supported this new bay and suggested that as part of this work, the word “School” should be painted onto the road and the zig-zags repainted. The clerk will contact the Head and explain that, in the first instance, the Parish Council hopes that the “School” sign on the road may assist with visitors locating the school rather than having a new road sign erected.
- 293 A Postwatch consultation regarding post offices was noted and individual Parish Councillors will complete this.
- 294 St Andrew’s Church had written confirming that they had no objection to the Parish Council taking steps to register Old Scenes and the Old Recreation Ground with the Land Registry.

- 295 An employment sites survey was noted from East Cambridgeshire District Council. The clerk will confirm that there are no changes necessary to this for Witchford.
- 296 A letter from noted from the Open Spaces Group explaining that the heaps of rubbish left some years ago in Sandpit Drove following ditch clearance have now been cleared with the help of Howard Palmer. The Open Spaces group proposes to sow the area with a native grass seed/wildflower mix in the spring. The seed will cost around £51 and it was proposed by Councillor Holdsworth, seconded by Councillor Bromley-Allen that the Parish Council pay for this seed. The clerk was instructed to write to Mr Howard Palmer thanking him for his time and the use of his machinery to carry out this remedial work.
- 297 **Reports by District Councillors** – Councillor P Wilson gave details of a Domestic Violence Forum she had recently attended. The Community Services Committee have recently allocated £2000 of their £5000 antisocial behaviour budget to mediation for a appropriate cases of antisocial behaviour
- 298 Councillor Gareth Wilson reported on recent discussions of the Resources Committee and the finances of the District Council. He and Councillor Allen had recently attended a meeting regarding HGVs where grave concerns were expressed regarding the increased number of these vehicles likely to be travelling from Block Fen in Mepal to the A14 and the proposed Northstowe. Some suggestion was made of an extra trackway bypassing villages which could be used only by HGVs.
- 299 Councillor Allen reported a joint meeting he had attended between the District and County Councils when he had asked that the proposed Ely Southern bypass be discussed and suggested that the County Council should be coming up with proposals for the next ten years. Councillor Hunt confirmed that Central Government have approved the Ely Southern bypass but explained that this is not a priority for the County Council at this time.
- 300 **Report from County Councillor:** Councillor Hunt explained changes proposed by the Government to Section 106 monies – planning gain supplements - and also explained that the Government grant to the County Council will be increased by only 2.9% although the County has a budget increase of 5%. He explained that this will lead to cuts in services. A meeting has been arranged with the County Council on 12th February regarding the redesignation of Sandpit Lane. This will be attended by Councillor Hunt, Councillor Jellicoe and the clerk. Councillor Hunt advised that he had had confirmation from the County Council that there would be no waste transfer at the proposed site 37 – this would be designated as a household waste recycling centre. He reported concern that 5 million tonnes of London waste is to come to Cambridgeshire before 2020. It is not clear whether this will go to Waterbeach or to Block Fen following gravel extraction.
- 301 **Planning** – the planning notes which had been circulated were noted. Members were surprised at the refusal of permission by the District Council for a two-storey extension to 9 Main Street.
- 06/01440/OUT – residential development, one building plot – land adjacent 41 Manor Close. A letter from local residents was read to the meeting. No objection although members noted the residents' concerns regarding drainage and will ensure that these are passed to the Planning Authority.
- 07/00015/FUL – two storey extension to existing house – 1A Sutton Road. No objection although concerns regarding parking provision on site which will be passed to Planning Authority.
- 06/01318/RMA – reserved matters for single dwelling – land adjoining 22 Sutton Road (Wentworth Parish) – no objection.
- 07/00103/FUL – extension to main entrance and extension to kitchen – Rackham School – no objection.

- 301 The clerk had prepared a briefing note on the first meeting of the Parish Plan Steering Group. Mr Andy Howe is Chairman, Mrs Sandra Thompson will act as Secretary and Mrs Gill Brand will act as Treasurer. The Parish Council will put forward some suggestions for topics to be considered by the steering group for incorporation into the questionnaire.
- 302 The Chairman declared a prejudicial interest in this item and left the room whilst the matter was discussed. The Vice-Chairman, Councillor Jellicoe, took the Chair for this item only. Three sealed tender envelopes had been received for repair work on the bus shelters and public seats in the village. These were opened at the meeting. One indicated that the sender did not wish to quote on this occasion. One tenderer had quoted for additional work not specified in the tender. It was proposed by Councillor Holdsworth, seconded by Councillor Allen that the lowest tender in the sum of £286.00 for labour and materials, from Alan Richardson, be accepted.
- Councillor Reports:** Councillor Flack-Crane took the Chair.
- 303 **Street Lighting** – all faulty lights have been reported.
- 304 **Play equipment** – Councillor Flack-Crane has carried out some remedial work on the play equipment in Bedwell Hey Lane. Two slats are missing off the roundabout and Councillor Flack-Crane will see if these can be repaired. He will also remove the two plates from the old sprung horses. Concern was expressed at the flooring on this play park and it was agreed to await the condition report from Cornhill Allianz which is due shortly. A child was injured by some goal posts left on Victoria Green by unknown people. These goal posts have been removed and scrapped.
- 305 **Grass cutting** – Taylor Woodrow have paid East Cambridgeshire District Council to cut the two grass pieces at the entrance to Field End.
- 306 **Open Spaces** –The hedge in Field End has been cut by East Cambridgeshire District Council and paid for by Taylor Woodrow.
- 307 Councillor Jellicoe advised on his progress with the registration of parish land. It was agreed that Mills Lane would be added to the list of land to be registered with the Land Registry. The Parish Council would write to adjoining landowners advising them of this. Councillor Jellicoe will research into Dunham's Lane and Granny's End to see if these could also be registered.
- 308 The clerk will check progress with the County Council on the encroachment in New Drove.
- 309 **Community** – Councillor Allen will cut down the dead tree in Bedwell Hey Lane. A large amount of graffiti has been experienced in the village, most of which has been cleaned away. The graffiti has been reported to the Police who are making enquiries into this. Councillor Colling reported some fly-tipping past the Village College and this will be reported.
- 310 **Wood** – nothing to report.
- 311 **Youth** – It was reported by ACRE that the Principal had advised that there is no land available at the Village College for the proposed youth facility. He has also advised that he will be shortly be leaving the Village College and that any decisions about land at the school will be a matter for the new Principal who is, as yet, not appointed. In addition it was reported that changes to the Youth Service mean that there are not enough resources for them to be involved at the moment. The Parish Council agreed with the advice from ACRE that this project should be put on hold until the new Principal of the Village College is in place.
- 312 **Finance:** It was proposed by Councillor Holdsworth, seconded by Councillor Bromley-Allen that the bank reconciliation, budget review as at January 2007 and the cheques detailed on the cheque schedule be approved.

313 Date of next meeting. Wednesday 7th March 2007. Staff appraisals will take place on 28th February 2007 at 7.30 p.m. at 174 Main Street.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.50 p.m.

Signed: Chairman

Date: