

Witchford Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs S M Monteith, 174 Main Street, Witchford Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB6 2HT
Telephone 01353 665707

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting and the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 9th May 2007 at 7.30 pm in St. Andrews Hall.

Present

Mr M Flack-Crane (in the chair)

Mr I Allen

Mr I Brand

Mrs S Bromley-Allen

Mr N Holdsworth

Mr B Colling

Mr G Jellicoe

Mr J Carter

In attendance: Mrs S Bowd, County Councillor Hunt

Apologies: District Councillors G and P Wilson

- 1 **Annual General Meeting
Election of Chairman for year 2007/2008**
Mr Flack-Crane took the Chair and asked for nominations for Chairman for the forthcoming year. Councillor Bromley-Allen proposed Councillor Flack-Crane and this was seconded by Councillor Jellicoe. There being no further nominations Councillor Flack-Crane was duly elected. The declaration of acceptance of office was signed by the Chairman.
- 2 Declarations of acceptance were signed by all Parish Councillors.
- 3 **Election of Vice-Chairman for year 2007/2008**
Councillor Holdsworth proposed that Councillor Jellicoe be Vice-Chairman, this was seconded by Councillor Carter. There being no further nominations Councillor Jellicoe was duly elected.
- 4 A notice has been put up asking for nominations for co-option of three Parish Councillors following the uncontested election. Forms should be returned to the clerk by 25th May 2007 and it is hoped to co-opt at the 6th June meeting of the Parish Council.
- 5 **Cambridgeshire Association of Local Councils** - Councillor Flack-Crane was appointed as the Council's representative to this body
- 6 **Ely Citizens' Advice Bureau** – Councillor Holdsworth was appointed as the Council's representative to this body.
- 7 **Review Hire of Herbage** - Discussion took place regarding the hire of herbage at The Old Recreation Ground. It was agreed to make no change at the present time.
- 8 To appoint Councillors for monitoring of

a)	Grass Cutting	-	Councillor Brand
b)	Play areas	-	Councillor Flack-Crane
c)	Street lighting	-	Councillor Colling
d)	Open spaces	-	Councillor Jellicoe
e)	Community matters	-	All Councillors
f)	Youth matters	-	Councillor Carter
g)	Wood	-	Councillor Allen

- 9 The Parish Council's **Risk Assessment** document was noted and approved. It was agreed to make minor changes to the wording in the Handywoman part of the document. The Responsible Financial Officer took the meeting through the Financial part of the document which incorporated a review of effectiveness of the system of internal control and this was all agreed by the Parish Council. It was agreed once again to appoint East Cambridgeshire District Council as internal auditor.
- 10 Draft **Financial Regulations** for the Parish Council had been circulated with the agenda and these were adopted.

Parish Council Meeting

Several local residents addressed the Parish Council regarding the proposed permissive path diversion agreement behind Granta Close and the proposals put forward by the Church Commissioners for England to the Local Development Framework regarding land at the eastern end of the village.

- 11 Miss S Blake of East Cambridgeshire District Council attended for this item only, to discuss possible funding available for replacing the **play equipment** in Bedwell Hey Lane. Information was given on grants which could be available and discussion took place on Section 106 agreements. Miss Blake will visit the clerk to go through documentation regarding Section 106 agreements. Miss Blake also gave information on the consultation thought to be necessary if grants are to be obtained. It was agreed to defer this matter to the next meeting at which it is hoped a Steering Group will be set up to move forward with the provision of new play equipment. The RFO will check the VAT position on any equipment bought for installation on land not owned by the Parish Council.
- 12 The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4th April 2007 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman. The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 18th April 2007 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman.
- 13 It was agreed to donate £400 to **Witchford Baby and Toddler** Group to enable the group to buy new nursery size tables and chairs for the group.
- 14 It was agreed to donate £703 for rent to **Witchford Rackham Pre-School**.
- 15 Changes were noted to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough **Minerals and Waste** Plan timetable for plan preparation. There will now be an additional formal consultation stage in September / October 2008 and the adoption of the plan is scheduled for December 2010.
- 16 A letter had been received from a local resident regarding vehicles being parked on the grass area in **Elm Close**. There is some confusion regarding ownership of this piece of land and the Parish Council is awaiting a response from the Land Registry regarding this. Once this response is received, then the matter will be discussed again.
- 17 It was noted that the Department for Communities and Local Government on 4th April 2007 issued the **Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007** prescribing a revised model code of conduct for members of local authorities. Advice from the Cambridgeshire Associations of Local Councils and East Cambridgeshire District Council is that the adoption of this Order take place in September and therefore this matter has been deferred until the July meeting of the Parish Council
- 18 Information was noted from East Cambridgeshire District Council regarding recruitment of Parish Council members of the **Standards** Committee.
- 19 Councillor Holdsworth will attend the East Cambridgeshire District Council and CALC Joint **Parish Forum** on Monday, 4th June at 7.00 p.m.
- 20 Councillor Jellicoe will attend the Ely Diocesan Environment Group **Churchyard Day** on 23rd June 2007. Details will be passed to the Open Spaces Group.

- 21 **Report from County Councillor** – Councillor Hunt explained that the relocation of the Park and Ride to Butts Lane had now been approved. Parish Councillors suggested that if a feasibility group is set up, a representative from Witchford Parish Council would wish to be involved. Some members felt that there were major problems with traffic congestion in the area and that steps need to be taken to address these. The County Council is discussing replacing street lights throughout the County and consultation will be carried out. Councillor Hunt stated that he would be in favour of a Southern bypass in Ely.
- 22 **Report from District Councillor** – Councillor Allen explained that following the recent District Council elections, the Conservatives are now the controlling group. He expressed his concerns regarding a recent planning consent on land to the east of Lancaster Way and proposals put forward to the LDF by the Church Commissioners for land around the Council depot in the area.
- 23 The receipts and payments information circulated by the Responsible Financial Officer was noted and agreed and the **Annual Return** for the External Auditor was agreed and signed by the Chairman, the RFO and the Clerk. The Council's Internal Auditor has completed a report on the accounts and no problems have been found. The RFO read and explained the Annual governance statement to the Parish Council and this was discussed and agreed.
- 24 **Planning:**
- The Church Commissioners for England have put forward to the Local Development Framework, conceptual proposals for development of land showing a net development area of around 6.8 ha which could support some 27,000 square meters of B1 (light industrial/research), B2 and B8 uses on land in Ely but which is at the eastern entrance to Witchford. Parish Councillors are extremely concerned at these proposals and a working party will be held on 16th May 2007 to formulate a response to the proposals. Further information has also been received regarding the consultation progress for the Local Development Framework and this will be discussed at the same working party.
- 07/00432/FUL – construction of two storey side extension – **33 Orton Drive**– no objection.
- 07/00469/FUL – replacement farmhouse – **Common Farm**. The Parish Council understands that according to Policy 88 of the Local Plan, this proposal would result in overdevelopment of the site but supports a modern family sized home on the site in order to ensure the sustainability of the farm business as a going concern which will contribute to the local economy. The Parish Council requests that the application be determined by the full planning committee.
- 25 It was agreed to invite Mr Hitch of Cambridgeshire County Council to tour the village with the Chairman, Councillor Colling and the clerk to discuss **street lighting** requirements.
- 26 At the April meeting of the Parish Council, the setting up of a working party was suggested to discuss **footpath 6** and the fact that a house was built some years ago on this footpath. It had been thought that there could be some benefit to the village in diverting the path so that an additional entrance into the Millennium wood could be achieved. Following further discussion with the owner of the house, the Parish Council resolved that there would be no benefit in continuing discussions regarding the possibility of diverting footpath 6.
- 27 Discussions have proceeded with Mrs Burroughes and Mrs Robinson regarding a **permissive path** agreement from Marroway Lane towards Field End. This would result in an agreement between the owners of the land and the County Council. The Parish Council has received objections to the diversion of the path and the matter was deferred until the meeting to be held on 6th June 2007.
- 28 Work continues towards producing the questionnaires for the **Parish Plan**.

Councillor Reports

- 29 **Street Lighting** – faulty lights have been reported.
- 30 **Play equipment** – some remedial work is still necessary at Bedwell Park playpark.
- 31 **Open Spaces** – the County Council have inspected the condition of the reported at the previous meeting of the Parish Council – Marroway Drove and the drove towards Coveney and Old Fen Baulk - and hope that remedial work can be put in place. The length between the Equestrian Centre and Common Farm has been done. It was agreed to order A New Guide to Registering Common Land and Village Greens at a cost of £30. It was agreed to order 4 new rakes at a cost of £17.99 each for use of the Open Spaces Group.
- 32 **Wood** – nothing to report.
- 33 **Youth** – nothing to report.
- 34 **Community** – some fly-tipping in Grunty Fen Road – this will be reported to East Cambridgeshire District Council. Problems with litter were reported in Manor Road past the entrance to the Village College and in Bedwell Hey Lane around the entrance to the playing fields and the pigeon hut, this despite the good efforts of the village Handywoman who is employed for six hours a week. Two Parish Councillors will monitor the amount of litter in the areas and this matter will be discussed at the next meeting of the Parish Council. The problems with Village College buses in the area of Rackham School was again highlighted. The clerk has contacted the County Council several times without success regarding this matter. Further attempts will be made, involving our County Councillor in the process. Traffic problems within the village were discussed and it was agreed to invite the County Council Traffic Engineer to attend a meeting of the Parish Council.
- 35 **Finance:** It was proposed by Councillor Holdsworth, seconded by Councillor Colling that the bank reconciliation and the budget review be noted and the cheques on the schedule of cheques be approved.
- 36 **Diary Dates**
 Parish Forum – 4th June 2007 (Councillor Holdsworth)
 Environment Day – 23rd June 2007 (Councillor Jellicoe)
 Date of next meeting. Wednesday 6th June 2007

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.40 p.m.

Signed:

Chairman

Date: