

## Witchford Parish Council

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### **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June 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  
Mrs S Bromley-Allen  
Mr I Brand  
Mr N Holdsworth  
Mr J Carter

**Apologies:** District Councillor P Wilson

**In attendance:** District Councillors G Wilson and County Councillor W Hunt

Prior to the start of the meeting two local residents addressed the meeting regarding the proposed permissive path from Marroway Lane towards Field End.

- 37 Two nominations had been received for the three vacancies in the office of Parish Councillor. Craig D’Cunha and Neil Cooper were duly **co-opted** and signed their Declarations of Acceptance of Office. The clerk will put another notice in the board advertising the remaining vacancy.
- 38 Councillor Carter declared a non-prejudicial interest in the item relating to Elm Close (minute 51) and took no part in the discussion.
- 39 The **minutes** of the Annual General Meeting and Parish Council meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2007 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman.
- 40 It was noted that Cambridgeshire County Council had awarded Witchford £400 for the year under the **Parish Paths Partnership**. Additionally gates will be provided by the Countryside Access Team.
- 41 **Report by County Councillor** – Councillor Hunt reported on the possible future introduction of **congestion charging** in Cambridge. The County Council are investigating this matter at the moment. He reminded the Parish Council that comments under the LDF need shortly to be with the District Council.
- 42 **Report by District Councillor** – Councillor Wilson explained that the Planning Committee of East Cambridgeshire District Council had visited **Rosswell Pits** in Ely but he was unable to advise the Parish Council on this as the update given to the members of the East Cambridgeshire Planning Committee was for their information only. He reminded members to send in their forms to East Cambridgeshire District Council recording any expenses incurred in the recent elections.
- 43 Councillor Allen reported that as he is not a member of the East Cambridgeshire Planning Committee, he can be free to discuss planning matters within the Parish Council without offending the Code of Conduct for Local Government. He explained that following recent District Council elections, pre-meeting briefings had been abolished and replaced by the Chairs’ Group. He reported that work was continuing to investigate the cost of the provision of **brown sacks** within the District. Councillor Allen has been appointed Traveller Champion for the District Council.

- 44 **Planning:** The planning notes circulated with the agenda were noted

07/00469/FUL – replacement farmhouse, **Common Farm**. East Cambridgeshire District Council had advised the Parish Council that they were minded to accept this as a bona fide application for somebody engaged in agriculture and in rural diversification and so are minded to approve the application. In order to guarantee agricultural occupancy, they would wish to impose a condition on any consent restricting occupancy of the dwelling to somebody employed in agriculture. The Parish Council was happy under these circumstances for the application to be determined by the Planning Department of East Cambridgeshire District Council.

On papers previously circulated concerning the **Local Development Framework**, East Cambridgeshire District Council state that Witchford Parish Council has proposed the inclusion of land at Sedgeway Business Park as possible employment land. This came about from the Parish Council's reply to the Employment Sites Issues and Options Paper in May/June 2006 where under question 6 "any other sites suitable for business" details were given of this site because of "proven local need and satisfies employment issues". The clerk was instructed to write to East Cambridgeshire District Council saying that they do not propose this site but would support it if it were brought forward.

Discussion took place on the Parish Council's response to the **LDF** consultation on Core Strategy Amendment Issues and Options Paper. The Parish Council's response needs to be with the District Council by 19<sup>th</sup> June 2007. This will be circulated to all Parish Councillors prior to this date. Individuals can also take part in this consultation by contacting the District Council.

07/005551/FUL – additional 8 stables – **Sedgeway Equestrian Centre** – no objection.

07/00566/FUL – construction of dwelling and detached garage (siting of mobile home during construction) land rear of **86 Main Street** – no objection.

Councillor D'Cunha left the meeting

- 45 It was agreed to set up a Steering Group to discuss replacement play equipment for the Bedwell Hey **playpark**. The Group will be the Chairman, Councillor Brand, the clerk and Zena Baker and Barry Coleman representing the WPGA. It was agreed to invite a representative from East Cambridgeshire District Council to the first meeting of the group.
- 46 The notes of the **Woodland Group** meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2007 was noted.
- 47 A further letter of objection was noted from a local resident regarding the negotiation of 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. This was discussed at length and the meeting was adjourned so that a local resident could speak on the matter. It was agreed that under the Parish Paths Partnership, the Parish Council would support the permissive path agreement but would keep the matter under review.
- 48 Discussion took place on the new **Model Code of Conduct** for Parish Councillors. The Chairman explained the implications of this following a recent meeting with the Cambridgeshire Association of Local Councils. It is hoped to adopt this new Code on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2007 and the matter will be on the agenda for the July meeting of the Parish Council.
- 49 Discussion took place regarding proposals for the **Jointly Funded Minor Highways** Improvements 2008-09 bidding round. One proposal was for a footpath (pavement) for the first 100 m of Grunty Fen Road on the western side and another proposal is for the provision of a crossing with lights outside Rackham School. It was thought that because of the junctions involved near the school, it was not technically possible to

install such a scheme but the clerk was asked to check this with the County Council. The matter will be deferred until the next meeting of the Parish Council.

- 50 The Chairman reported that work is proceeding well on the **Parish Plan**.
- 51 Information has now been received from the Land Registry that the land in **Elm Close** is registered to R H Spicer 1974 Ltd. No entry for this name can be found at Company's House. The Parish Council has supporting evidence that it has maintained this land since 1979 and will make an application for adverse possession to the Land Registry. Within this process, the owners have two years to oppose the granting of adverse possession. A letter was received from a local resident regarding parking on the grass area. The clerk was instructed to reply stating that because of the maintenance of the piece of land for grass cutting, the Parish Council would prefer that residents did not park on the grass.

**Councillor Reports:**

- 52 **Street Lighting** – faulty lights have been reported.
- 53 **Play equipment** – some remedial work is still necessary at Bedwell Park playpark and the Chairman undertook to deal with this.
- 54 **Grass cutting** – the grass cutting contractor has reported a dead Horse Chestnut tree in the Churchyard – this has been reported to the Vicar.
- 55 **Open Spaces** – A report has been received that trees on the Main Street near Granta Close have been badly pruned by persons unknown. The Chairman will check on this. Overhanging brambles were reported obstructing the footpath in Granta Close and the clerk was asked to speak to the occupant regarding this. Trees in Field End are obstructing street lights. This has been reported to Highways who have taken up the matter with Taylor Woodrow. Some shrubs have been obstructing the pavement in Field End. Highways Division advise that these are the responsibility of the residents of the area but on this occasion, the County Council has cut them back. The Chairman will open the new permissive path in Grunty Fen Road on 21<sup>st</sup> June during the guided walk.
- 56 **Community** – The Chairman thanked Councillor Bromley-Allen for her work in planting flowers around the village sign. It was reported that youngsters have been setting fire to aerosols and throwing them around in Bedwell Hey Lane. Any instances of this type of behaviour should be reported to the Police.
- 57 **Wood** – Already reported
- 58 **Youth** – Contact had been made by the young people involved in the proposed multi-purpose youth facility project. The Parish Council reiterated its support in principle for provision of youth facilities and it was agreed that Councillor Carter would represent the Parish Council.
- 59 **Finance:** It was proposed by Allen seconded by Councillor Brand that the bank reconciliation and the cheques detailed on the cheque schedule be approved.
- 60 Date of next meeting: 4<sup>th</sup> July 2007.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.00 p.m.

Signed: ..... Chairman  
Date: .....