

## Witchford Parish Council

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### **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2007 at 7.30 pm in the Scout Hut**

#### **Present**

Mr M Flack-Crane (in the chair)  
Mr G Jellicoe  
Mr I Allen  
Mr N Holdsworth  
Mrs D Field  
Mr J Carter  
Mrs S Bromley-Allen  
Mr I Brand

Apologies: Mr B Colling, Mr N Cooper (work commitments), Mr C D'Cunha, County Councillor Hunt (family commitments)

In attendance: District Councillors G Wilson and P Wilson

- 140 The **minutes** of the Parish Council meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2007 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman.
- 141 Councillors Flack-Crane, Holdsworth and Brand were reminded that their new Registration and **Declaration of Interest** forms need to be completed and returned.
- 142 The meeting was attended by Mr Mick Oliver from Witchford **Youth Club** who explained the finances of the Youth Club and the new organisation of the County Youth Service. Witchford is part of a group of eleven villages in the catchment area of the Village College; the County pays £108000 for administration costs and two salaries for the eleven villages. Witchford Youth Club is then financed by the Parish Council and by £2 per session fees paid by the approximately 22/25 youngsters per week who attend. 47 youngsters are on the books. Parish Councillors have requested that their Responsible Financial Officer discusses the Youth Club accounts with their treasurer and the second installment of the Parish Council's donation can be paid following this meeting taking place and Mrs Bowd recommending payment.
- 143 A letter was noted from Cambridgeshire Constabulary stating that the Witchford Neighbourhood Police Officer, PC Martin, had moved beats and had been replaced by PC Neil Evans.
- 144 Information was noted from the East Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership regarding Hollowe'en.
- 145 **Report from District Councillor:** Councillor Pauline Wilson reported on a recent visit to the Cambridge CCTV centre. She will attend a Community Services Committee meeting of the District Council next week at which the introduction of Neighbourhood Panels to the northern part of the District will be discussed. An item appears on the agenda regarding a grant application for improvements to St Andrew's Hall. The Parish Council is concerned that any money donated by the District Council to this project, does not come from the Witchford **Section 106** monies held by the District Council and which the Parish Council intends to use to update the play equipment at Bedwell Hey Lane. The District Council has previously been requested to contact the Parish Council should there be a possibility of Section 106 monies being used for a project not organised by the Parish Council. Councillor Wilson will investigate this.

Councillor Gareth Wilson reported on the “**Stop Mereham**” campaign. The Inquiry into the refusal of planning permission starts on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2007 at the Arkenstall Centre, Haddenham. A meeting has been held with Sutton Mepal and Haddenham Parish Councils and Earith Village Association to discuss and take appropriate action relating to HCVs using village roads. Witchford will be invited to a future meeting.

Councillor Allen spoke regarding the **Neighbourhood Panels** and stated that the panels are weighted towards parishes rather than towards the District or County Councils. He explained some work being carried on by the Strategic Development Committee towards the next stage of the **Local Development Framework**. He also reported on the **Ely Transport Strategy** consultation document which does not appear specifically to mention cars.

146 **County Councillor Hunt** was not present at the meeting but had sent a report which included information on the Mereham campaign. He also referred to the meeting with the County Council Highways Department to be held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2007 at 7.00 p.m. which Councillors Allen and Cooper hope to attend.

147 **Planning**

07/00927/FUL – construction of boundary wall 2 metres high – 39 Field End. A letter of objection from a local resident was read to the meeting. Objection: The site is located within a modern residential estate within which the dwellings are set back from the road with open or green frontages. The wall would appear incongruous in the street scene and would be out of keeping with the properly considered planned layout and design of the site. There is insufficient space between the wall and the pavement to enable appropriate boundary planting. The Parish Council requests that the boundary is returned to the position and height agreed under the original planning consent.

07/01049/FUL – addition of a porch – 17 Priors Close, Bedwell Park – no objection

148 Consultation had been carried out regarding the proposed **five new street lights**: outside 8 and 2 Marroway Lane and at the side of 17 Marroway Lane, opposite 2 Bedwell Hey Lane, and near to the entrance to Priors Close. No objections had been received. It was proposed by Councillor Carter, seconded by Councillor Jellicoe that the new lights be ordered from the County Council at a cost of £7948.18.

149 A meeting had been held at the Churchyard with the Vicar, the **grass cutting** contractor and Councillors Jellicoe and Brand and the clerk. The Vicar had requested a change to the cutting regime at the lower section of the Churchyard to encourage the growth of wild flowers. To cut and remove growth three times a year to best promote wild flower growth would cost an additional £300. The Parish Council did not agree to this request and the clerk is to write to the Vicar explaining that the Parish Council will only pay for the grass to be cut according to the contract. An option for the Church Council would be to leave two pieces uncut in each corner of the bottom of the Churchyard. Unless the Parish Council hears to the contrary from the Church, then the whole of the grass will be cut according to the contract. The contractor agreed to leave a patch of grass near the Church which he will cut three times a year; there is no cost implication in this. Some grass had been cut at the bottom of the Churchyard and left. It was proposed by Councillor Allen, seconded by Councillor Brand that Truelink be authorized to collect this grass at a cost of £80. The clerk will remind the Church Council that if the Parish Council pays for grass cutting, then the grass should be left for the contractor to cut according to the contract.

150 The clerk is in the process of arranging on behalf of East Cambridgeshire District Council the first meeting of the group set up to advise them on landscape issues at **Victoria Green**. The Parish Council noted that an e-mail group had been set up called the Victoria Green Advisory Group. Parish Councillors made it clear that the group is set up on behalf of and at the request of East Cambridgeshire District Council to canvass opinion to assist them in planning their maintenance regime.

- 151 A further meeting has not yet taken place regarding replacement **play equipment** at Bedwell Hey lane. The Chairman will pass all the information to the clerk who will arrange a further meeting with a view to setting up a display in the Scout Hut. A note would be sent around Rackham School inviting children and their parents to visit the display on a Wednesday evening (to be arranged) between 7.00 p.m. and 8.00 p.m.
- 152 The **Parish Plan** has been distributed with the Witchfordian. The Parish Council expressed its thanks to Mr Andy Howe and the rest of the committee for their hard work in getting the plan to this stage.

### Councillor Reports

- 153 **Street lights:** already reported.
- 154 **Play equipment:** already discussed.
- 155 **Grass cutting:** already discussed.
- 156 **Open spaces: The Open Spaces** Group has been given a grant by "It's Your Community" for £1000 for work on the Old Recreation Ground, including the restoration of the old pond. The Open Spaces group will discuss this with Mr Oates who rents the herbage from the Parish Council and will prepare a press release. The Parish Council congratulated the Open Spaces Group on receiving this award.

Councillor Jellicoe reported that the County Council have put temporary restriction orders on byway 10, Old Fen Balk Road, Granny's End and Old Fen Drove, **northern rights of way** which are still very badly rutted. The County are discussing the Catchwater Drain drove with the Drainage Authority and are awaiting their response. The Parish Council is concerned that these traffic orders are enforced.

The Parish Council is attempting to register certain droves within the village. Some information has come forward regarding past usage of Mills Lane. The Parish Council would be grateful if anybody who has any information on grazing etc in Mills Lane could contact the clerk.

### 157 **Community**

Mr Richardson has stated that it is not possible to repair the concrete base for the **bench** near the allotments but that he could replace the base at a cost of £355. In view of the fact that the base is unsafe, it was proposed by Councillor Holdsworth, seconded by Mrs Bromley-Allen that Mr Richardson be asked to carry out this work as soon as possible.

It was noted that **Scouts** have been requested to move their waste paper collection skip from the Grovemere Business Park. This will be relocated to behind the bungalow in Lancaster Way.

Some bushes have been cut on the Bedwell Park side of **Bedwell Hey Lane**. Councillor Bromley-Allen will enquire if these have been cut by Bedwell Park management and – if so - ask that the clippings be tidied up.

The clerk was asked to check with the County Council if any progress has been made with highways issues in **Manor Court Road**.

Complaints have again been received regarding **motorbikes** riding between Meadow Close and Manor Court Road. This will again be reported to the Police and Sanctuary Housing (Hereward) will again be contacted to see if they can improve the bollards between Meadow Close and Manor Court Road.

- 158 **Wood :** Nothing to report
- 159 **Youth –** already discussed.

160 **Finance:** It was proposed by Councillor Bromley-Allen seconded by Councillor Field that the bank reconciliation and the cheques detailed on the cheque schedule be approved.

161 Date of next meeting 7<sup>th</sup> November 2007 in St Andrew's Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.00 p.m. The Chairman thanked Witchford Scout Group for inviting the Parish Council to hold this meeting in the Scout Hut.

Signed: ..... Chairman

Date: .....