

Witchford Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 2nd January 2008 at 7.30 pm in St Andrew's Hall

Present

Mr M Flack-Crane (in the chair)

Mr G Jellicoe

Mr B Colling

Mrs S Bromley-Allen

Mr I Brand

Mrs D Field

Mr N Cooper

Apologies: Mr J Carter, District Councillor P Wilson

In Attendance: County Councillor W Hunt and District Councillor G Wilson

- 217 The **minutes** of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th December 2007 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman.
- 218 A letter from Ely and Soham **Dial-a-Ride** was noted thanking the Parish Council for its donation. Councillor Hunt confirmed that the Parish Council's donation of £350 is in line with donations made by other Parish Councils. The clerk was instructed to invite a representative of Dial-a-Ride to the Annual Parish Meeting in April.
- 219 A letter was noted from the County Council regarding **Manor Court Road** following the query as to why no progress appears to have been made when the Parish Council was told in June 2006 that a meeting had been held with the various parties to agree what needed to be done to bring the road up to adoption standard; the site was surveyed and estimates prepared for the necessary work. The Parish Council was told then that the matter had been passed to the County Road Agreement Engineer. The County now state that any correspondence should be directed to the owners of the road. It was agreed to ask County Councillor Hunt to arrange a meeting between the County Council Development Control Inspector, County Councillor Hunt, District Councillor G Wilson, Councillor Jellicoe and the clerk.
- 220 Councillor Cooper agreed to attend a briefing meeting with the County Council on Tackling **Congestion** in Cambridge. This will be on 30th January 2008 from 6.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.
- 221 Receipt of the **Parish Path Partnership** (P3) application forms for 2008/09 was noted. Councillor Jellicoe and the clerk will complete these on behalf of the Parish Council.
- 222 A letter from the **St Andrew's Hall Group** was noted thanking the Parish Council for its donation of £420 and enclosing three quotations regarding the hearing induction loop system as requested. It was proposed by Councillor Cooper, seconded by Councillor Jellicoe that the donation of £580 now be paid towards the provision of this hearing loop system.
- 223 A draft document from East Cambridgeshire District Council regarding its **Sustainable Community Strategy** was noted. Comments are required on this by 11th February and it was agreed to ask Councillor Carter if he would be willing to comment on this document on behalf of the Parish Council.

- 224 An invitation was noted to the AGM of the **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils** on 2nd February 2008. Unfortunately no Parish Councillor was able to attend.
- 225 The clerk had written to the County Council regarding the proposed **household waste site** to the east of the village pointing out that under the East Cambridgeshire local development framework proposals “area is not considered suitable for large scale employment expansion due to adverse visual impact and impact on character of nearby settlement”. The Parish Council has commented endorsing this view. In view of this, the clerk was instructed to write asking are the County revisiting possible locations for the proposed facility and are they still in discussion with the Church Commissioners regarding this land. The County had now responded that the query regarding the Church Commissioners was a matter for the Waste Management Section of the County Council as the Waste Disposal Authority rather than the Waste Planning Authority. The clerk was instructed to write to this section of the County Council.

Report from County Councillor

- 226 County Councillor Hunt gave an update on the Mereham Inquiry and explained that summing up should take place next week. He advised that a new Chief Executive has been appointed by the County Council. He explained that work on the guided bus is proceeding and gave an update on the possible congestion charge in Cambridge. He explained that because of the latest Revenue Grant announcement, the County Council’s share of council tax is likely to go up and yet cuts in service will still be necessary.

Report from District Councillor

- 227 Councillor Gareth Wilson explained the recent Revenue Grant announcement which will give an increase of 1% next year, below the rate of inflation. The District Council has appealed against this figure. Councillor Wilson explained progress with the Anglia Revenue Partnership which deals with collection of tax and payment of benefits for East Cambridgeshire District Council and other local authorities.

228 Planning

07/01403/FUL – erection of 750 square metres of industrial units to let at Ashley Park, Common Road – no objection
 07/01238/FUL – single storey side extension – 8 Common Road – no objection
 07/01318/OUT – change of application type from outline to full – land to rear of 14 Manor Close – no objection
 07/01446/FUL – single storey and first floor extension – 1 Barton Close – no objection

- 229 It was agreed to defer the item regarding the possible termination of the **Alderforth access area** in August 2009 to the next meeting of the Parish Council.
- 230 Parish Councillors had expressed concern regarding the amount of “**consultation paperwork**” received from various organisations but mainly from the District and County Council – it was estimated that 9000 pages had been received this year - asking for comment from the Parish Council. Parish Councillors felt that often organisations are merely proving that they have consulted with Parishes by sending out this information; often with no attempt being made to provide an executive summary nor to tailor the information to individual parishes by providing information relating to specific issues relative to individual villages. The Parish Council felt that attempts should be made to reduce the burden – a starting point would be that all PDF documents provided should be searchable. The Parish Council takes its responsibilities in responding to consultation very seriously but believes that there is sometimes a degree of deliberate obfuscation in the amount of material provided. The clerk was instructed to write to the Cambridgeshire Association of Local Councils regarding this and also to copy the letter to the District and County Councils.

- 231 The consultation evening with children regarding the play equipment at Bedwell Hey Lane will take place on 23rd January at the Scout Hut – this has been published in the Witchfordian and will also be in the next issue of the Witchfordian. Flyers will be sent out through St Andrew’s School.
- 232 Analysis has now begun on the responses received to the Parish Plan.

Councillor Reports

- 233 **Street lights:** faulty lights have been reported.
- 234 **Play equipment:** already discussed.
- 235 **Grass cutting:** nothing to report.
- 236 **Open spaces:** two issues were highlighted concerning **Grunty Fen Road** – one that there is a short distance when having come over the stile into the road, there is a danger from traffic – Parish Councillors undertook to look if a small length of pipework could be installed so that walkers did not need to be on the road. The second problem is nearer to the junction with Main Street because of the lack of a pavement. When vehicles are parked – such as a tanker delivering oil - the danger to the pedestrian is substantial. The Parish Council has applied for work to be done to improve this situation under the Joint Minor Highways system and the clerk was instructed to contact the County Council to enquire of progress with this.
- 237 A tree has been damaged on **Victoria Green** – East Cambridgeshire District Council have been advised of this.
- 238 **Community:** A query was raised regarding **school crossing patrols**. Some Parish Councillors believed that school crossing patrols were not meant to be used by adults but a leaflet produced by the Department of Transport stated that “school crossing patrols are not just for children – patrol officers may assist anyone who seeks their help in crossing the road”. The clerk was instructed to attempt to obtain some clarification regarding this.
- 239 Work is now almost complete to allow the registration of certain pieces of land by the Parish Council. More information would still be useful on **Mills Lane** and the clerk will contact the archivist at the County Council.
- 240 Discussion took place on the **mobile library** which will now stop in Bedwell Hey Lane rather than on the Main Road at the eastern end of the village. Discussion took place on whether it was likely to be able to call at Cathedral View Park bearing in mind the timetable and Councillor Colling undertook to investigate if there would in any event be any call for this.
- 241 **Wood :** a work session recently took place.
- 242 **Youth:** Nothing to report.
- 243 **Finance:** It was proposed by Councillor Cooper seconded by Councillor Jellicoe that the bank reconciliation and the cheques detailed on the cheque schedule be approved.
- 244 Date of next meeting 6th February 2008 in St Andrew’s Hall.
- There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.

Signed: Chairman Date: