

## 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 6<sup>th</sup> February 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

Mr N Holdsworth

Mr I Allen

Apologies: Mr J Carter, Mr C D'Cunha, County Councillor W Hunt

In Attendance: District Councillor P Wilson and District Councillor G Wilson

- 245 The **minutes** of the Parish Council meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2008 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman.
- 246 The Highways Department of the County Council had advised that Witchford's bid under the Joint **Minor Highways** scheme for work to be carried out to improve the safety of the junction of Grunty Fen Road with Main Street had not been successful this year. This project was given six points whereas the cut line was eight points. The County Council advised that they thought it was a reasonable scheme and worth considering again for inclusion next time. District Councillor Allen who is a member of the Committee (which is funded 50% by the County Council and 50% by the District Council) reported that the number of schemes carried out has been greatly reduced because of inflationary pressures.
- 247 More information was noted from the County Council regarding **Manor Court Road** following the query as to why no progress appears to have been made. County Councillor Hunt had advised the clerk that he had spoken with Mr John Coyle of the County Council who advised him that there is nothing can be done by the County Council who will not adopt a road until it is up to an adoptable standard which will last for twenty years. A letter had been received from Sanctuary Hereward enclosing a plan of the road with their interpretation of how they think the ownership of the road is made up. Councillor Allen has been speaking with the District Council Legal Department regarding this matter and has been told that the District Council has engaged consultants to work towards adoption of the sewers/drains prior to adoption of the road. They are awaiting the results of this survey. Councillor Jellicoe has researched the history of this road and it appears that historic responsibility lay with Ely Rural District Council which has evolved into East Cambridgeshire District Council and Sanctuary Hereward. The clerk was instructed to contact Robin Dunn of East Cambridgeshire District Council to ask how long the District Council envisages this survey will take and therefore, when work can take place to improve the road.
- 248 Information was noted from the **School Crossing** Patrol Service Manager of the County Council in response to a query regarding school crossing patrols. He states that the Road Traffic Act was reviewed and the new Act published in 2000. With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2001, school crossing patrols are empowered to stop vehicles in relation to crossing children and adults. This includes adults without children having to be present. The previous restrictions with regard to operating times was also changed. It previously stated Monday to Friday 8.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. but since 2001, they can operate on any day of the week and at weekends.

- 249 Responses were noted from Cambridgeshire County Council and East Cambridgeshire District Council regarding the Parish Council's recent complaint to CALC regarding the **amount of consultation paperwork** received.
- 250 The Parish Council noted a consultation document from the Department for Communities and Local Government, on Orders and Regulations Relating to the **Conduct of Local Authority Members** in England.
- 251 Information was noted from the County Council regarding staffing changes at **Highways**. Their maintenance service will now be headed by Graham Mallot with Steve Dighton as the Area Maintenance Engineer.
- 252 A letter had been received from the manager of the sheltered housing scheme at Manor Court regarding the **recycling bins**. The clerk has forwarded the letter to the Environmental Health Department of East Cambridgeshire District Council who are responsible for the recycling bins. District Council Allen reported that it was his understanding that when kerbside collection of plastic begins in April, the plastic recycling bins will be removed.
- 253 The Parish Council noted the consultation document from the District Council on the introduction of the national standard planning application form (**1APP**).
- 254 Confirmation of the **Permissive Path** Agreement on land owned by Mrs Burroughes et al, Witchford has now been received from the County Council. Councillor Jellicoe has erected the signs on the site.
- 255 A response to the Parish Council's letter expressing concern at the recent cut in the District Council's grant to **ADeC** was noted. District Councillor Brian Ashton, confirms that they do not hold out any hope for a reinstatement of the previous budget.
- 256 The Parish Council noted a list of **byways** that are to be closed to vehicles pending works for the next six months. These are byways 12, 15, 16, 19 Coveney, No 4 Wentworth, Nos 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, Witcham and No 10 Witchford.
- 257 The Parish Council noted information from the **Audit** Commission that they intend to appoint Moore Stephens as auditor to Witchford Parish council. The appointment will be for a five year period commencing with the 2007/08 accounts.

#### **Report from District Councillors**

- 258 District Councillor Pauline Wilson reported on a recent meeting of the District Council Personnel Committee. Councillor Pauline Wilson has been appointed Chair of the **West Neighbourhood Panel** and she explained that vehicles driving on green lanes emerged as a priority for action from the recent meeting of the Panel. The Neighbourhood Action Group will feed back information from the Panel Meetings.
- 259 District Councillor Gareth Wilson reported on the recent short Council meeting which was held to approve licensing regulations. The **Mereham** Public Inquiry finished on 8<sup>th</sup> January. The Inspector announced he would be producing his report on 21<sup>st</sup> April and the Minister's decision would be announced by 9<sup>th</sup> September. Councillor Wilson reported on budget discussions at the District Council and advised that it has now been decided to recommend that East Cambridgeshire District Council's element of the **council tax** will increase by 3.72%. He explained that he has proposed that the recent £70,000 cut to **ADeC**'s grant be reduced to £35000 in 2008/09. Councillor Wilson explained that the Planning Committee of the District had met to discuss the Ely "master plan" and Angel Drove.
- 260 District Councillor Allen reported that he had expressed his concerns regarding the proposed development of **Angel Drove** under the Ely "master plan". He was concerned that a change in the category of development permitted on the site could lead to the balance of the site being changed. The present B1 office use is likely to be changed to mix of development including B2 light industrial and B8 storage and distribution plus a hotel and pub restaurant. Councillor Allen reported that in the 3

months October, November and December 2007 122000 tons of waste went to **landfill** whereas in the same three months in 2006 when the alternate weekly collection trial was in operation in Witchford, 96000 tons went to landfill. Because of a large overspend on brown bags, Councillor Allen reported that the District Council intends to cut the provision of these bags to households.

261 **Planning**

07/01460/PDR – construction of car port to the rear of property – **77 Main Street** – Councillor Colling declared a non prejudicial interest in this item and took no part in the discussion. Objection: the original consent stated in principle that nothing should be built to the rear of the site because of the proximity to the school; the original planning consent should be adhered to.

08/00029/FUL – extension to existing bungalow to convert to house – **1 Main Street**. No objection.

08/00033/OUT – demolition of existing garage and part of utility and construction of detached dwelling – **41 Manor Close**. A letter of objection from two local residents was read to the meeting. No objection but planners should take account of letter from neighbours.

08/00025/FUL – construction of single storey extension to rear – **165 Main Street** – no objection.

262 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 County Council have advised that they have an option to buy “site 37” and that the County may apply for planning permission for a household waste facility on the site. The County Council are working on the existing County Waste Plan (2003) prior to the publication of the Options under the Waste Plan under consideration at the moment, the results of which are due to be published in the autumn. The County state that any new emerging plans (LDF) do not attract weight in the determination of planning applications until they are adopted. In the case of the Minerals and Waste Plan, that will not be until 2010. Until that time they say that they have to rely on the policies of the adopted Waste Local Plan 2003. It was agreed that Councillor Jellicoe and Councillor Carter will attend a meeting to be arranged with the County Council at which County officers will be asked to allow access to their files under the Freedom of Information Act. An extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council will then be arranged with officers of the County Council being asked to attend. The clerk was instructed to write to the County Council regarding this.

263 Mr Palmer advised that funding by DEFRA for the public access area at **Alderforth Farm** is to be withdrawn from August 2009; the permissive path in the area would be closed at this time. The clerk was instructed to write to East Cambridgeshire District Council asking if they are able to put any pressure on DEFRA to continue their funding of the area, or to provide any funding themselves.

264 The **Equal Opportunities** Policy and **Child Protection** Policy were adopted.

265 Two volumes containing minutes of the Parish Council from 1894 to 1970 are on deposit with the archivist at the County Council. Minutes from 21<sup>st</sup> May 1970 are kept in the clerk’s home. It was agreed that the quotation of File Flatners Ltd of £85 for the scanning of the minute books held by the clerk be accepted. Once these documents are received on disk, then the minutes will be withdrawn from the archives, copied and returned. One disk would then be held by the clerk and one by the Chairman.

266 The date for staff appraisals and appointing of members to the Personnel Working party was deferred until the next meeting.

- 267 The Sandpit Lane Management Plan to August 2008 prepared by the Open Spaces Group was noted and approved.
- 268 It was confirmed that the Annual Parish Meeting will take place on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2008. The clerk will invite representatives of village organisations.
- 269 Consultation has taken place regarding play equipment for Bedwell Hey Lane playpark and letters have been sent asking for quotations.
- 270 Analysis of the Parish Plan continues. It is hoped that a public meeting to present the results can take place in April.

**Councillor Reports**

- 271 **Street lights:** 19 faulty lights have been reported.
- 272 **Play equipment:** already discussed.
- 273 **Grass cutting:** prices for the current year have been received with a small uplift for inflation. The contractor has been asked to contact the clerk who will check with Councillor Brand before starting grass cutting.
- 274 **Open spaces –** already discussed.
- 275 **Community:** Some fly tipping has taken place near to the sewage works and the clerk will report this to the District Council. Discussion took place concerning the give-way sign at the road junction at Pools Road/Gruntly Fen Road.(grid reference TL50478). Members felt that this junction should have a Stop sign and the clerk will contact Highways regarding this.
- 276 Councillor Colling has spoken to residents of Cathedral View Park and approximately two-thirds of the people have indicated that they would use the mobile library if it could call there. The clerk will contact the County Council regarding this.
- 277 **Wood :** nothing to report.
- 278 **Youth:** Nothing to report.
- 279 **Finance:** It was proposed by Councillor Cooper seconded by Councillor Jellicoe that the bank reconciliation, budget review and the cheques detailed on the cheque schedule be approved.
- 280 Date of next meeting 5<sup>th</sup> March 2008 in St Andrew’s Hall.

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

Signed: ..... Chairman

Date: .....