

Witchford Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 6th August 2008 at 7.30 pm in St Andrew's Hall

Present

Mr G Jellicoe (in the chair)
Mr I Allen
Mrs D Field
Mr I Brand
Mr N Holdsworth
Mr J Carter

Apologies: Mr M Flack-Crane Mr B Colling, Mr N Cooper, Mrs S Bromley-Allen, Mr A Shields

In Attendance: County Councillor W Hunt, District Councillors P Wilson and G Wilson

- 97 The Clerk declared a non-pecuniary interest in minute number 111ii.
- 98 Mr Mark Osborne, Development Officer of Sanctuary Hereward explained their proposals for the garage site at **Manor Court** and **Manor Close**. He confirmed that letters had been sent to residents and that Sanctuary Hereward are committed to building as much new, affordable property as possible. He explained that it is difficult to acquire land where the rent can cover the costs. He believed that four garages on the site are currently used for vehicles with no clear parking alternative. Sanctuary Hereward are currently looking at various options to solve this difficulty. Members emphasised to him that they did not want a similar situation to occur as that in Meadow Close when the new flats were built with a subsequent loss of parking. When a planning application is submitted to East Cambridgeshire District Council, Parish Councillors stressed that it should be clear that the application does not create a parking problem by displacing cars onto the road.
- 99 Mr Osborne explained that the proposed site at **Barton Close** was on the "back burner" as Hereward have recently found out that the site is owned by East Cambridgeshire District Council. Parish Councillors were surprised at this as they did not believe there has been any doubt that the site is owned by East Cambridgeshire District Council. (Mr Osborne left the meeting).
- 100 Helen Simonds addressed the meeting regarding the threatened closure to the general public of the health and **fitness suite** at Witchford Village College with effect from 31st August 2008. Mrs Simonds outlined the background and detailed the steps she and others had taken to attempt to have the decision of the Village College reversed. It was agreed that the Parish Council would write to the Principal and Governors of the Village College regretting the fact that residents of the village would lose an amenity and stating that the Parish Council believed that provision of sports facilities for the community was part of the reason for the College being granted Sports College status. The Parish Council will ask what other avenues of funding have been explored by the College and what responses have been received. (Mrs Simonds left the meeting.)
- 101 Mr Andy Howe, Chairman of the Parish Plan Committee, explained that an Action Plan has now been published following adoption of the **Parish Plan** by the Parish Council. The Parish Council agreed to take ownership of the Action Plan and it was agreed that a steering group be set up to ensure that work takes place to see that recommended actions are dealt with in a timely fashion. It was agreed that a group of around six people would be set up, including say three representatives of the Parish Council and

three from the Parish Plan Committee. This matter will be put on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting. (Mr Howe left the meeting).

- 102 District Councillor Pauline Wilson and Councillors Carter and Holdsworth reported on the **Speedwatch** initiative which had been discussed at the Neighbourhood Panel. It was agreed to defer this matter until information was available on funding and other issues from the Police.
- 103 **Report from County Councillor:** Councillor Hunt encouraged members to respond to the Market Town Initiative consultation. He explained the revisiting of the congestion charge for Cambridge. He stated that the guided bus project is on target. He spoke of his opposition to Post Office closures and stated that a petition regarding Mereham has been handed in to the Department of Communities. He said that he believed the only really logical location for the proposed household waste recycling centre is near the salt tower and that people were panic-ing and over-reacting to this issue. The Chairman emphasised that the Parish Council was totally opposed to this proposed siting and believed that our County Council representative should support the Parish in this. Councillor Hunt said he agreed with this but stated that the facility has to go somewhere.
- Report from District Councillors:**
- 104 Councillor Pauline Wilson reported on the Neighbourhood Panel meeting and the Community Services meeting which had discussed CCTV.
- 105 Councillor Gareth Wilson reported on two member seminars he had attended, one relating to Post Office closures and one relating to the proposed decriminalisation of parking where proposals were that local authorities would take over enforcement of parking regulations rather than this being done by the Police. He stated that East Cambridgeshire District Council had been given £698000 by the Government as a planning development grant and gave an update on the Planning Committee held earlier in the day.
- 106 Councillor Allen reported that he has been appointed a member of the Country Park Working Party. He explained discussions which recently took place regarding the circulation of confidential papers to members of East Cambridgeshire District Council. He explained that East Cambridgeshire District Council will not meet its recycling targets and that he had requested a review of the rubbish collecting services following many complaints. He was surprised to note that the District Council is replacing all furniture in the Council chamber.
- 107 The **minutes** of the Parish Council meeting held on 2nd July 2008 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman.
- 108 Councillor Carter undertook to study the **Market Town Strategy** documents.
- 109 The new e-mail access for members to the **CPALC** site was noted. It was agreed to nominate Mr Graham Barber for the draw to be held for an invitation to the Buckingham Palace Garden Party. (Mr Barber is the only person who currently meets all the conditions for nomination.)
- 110 An e-mail had been received from Graham Barber regarding objections to the siting of the proposed household waste recycling centre and this has been circulated to all members. It was reiterated that members are totally opposed to this and that the Parish Council will object when the planning application is received and, if the County Council deem consent, then the Parish Council will in all probability appeal against this decision. The Parish Council feels that the decision has been made solely on the grounds of deliverability and has had many meeting with the County confirming its opposition. The Parish Council continues totally to oppose the proposed location of this facility and maintains its view that the conditions outlined by the Planning Inspector have not been

addressed, and that alternative sites have not properly been evaluated. There are also concerns regarding traffic exiting the site and fly tipping and litter in the area. The Planning application is due to be submitted in September – this is a public document and all residents do have the option to object to it.

111 **Planning:**

i 08/00751/FUL - 1 no four bed house with integral garage – land adjacent **3 Marroway Lane**, Witchford – Parish Council has no objection to infilling the frontage of Marroway Lane but objects to building outside the development envelope. The Parish Council understands that the Planning Officer has referred the matter of the storage sheds on the site (mentioned in the design and access statement) to the Enforcement Officer.

ii 08/00733/FUL – demolish existing garage, construct two storey and first floor extensions and rear conservatory – **172 Main Street** - no objection.

iii 08/00563/ESO – extension to **Lancaster Way Business Park** including infrastructure, roads services yards, drainage and landscape works – discussed at meeting on 2nd July 2008. The Planning Officer has responded to the clerk with some further queries which have been responded to by Councillor Jellicoe.

iv Following a request to the clerk, further clarification had been sent by Councillor Jellicoe regarding the Parish Council's comments concerning the Local Development Framework consultation.

112 Only two cuts are left in the schedule for the **Churchyard**. There are eleven cuts in the contract. Bearing in mind that the grass cutting season could extend into October, the contractor had asked that more cuts be authorized. Each cut of the Churchyard costs £123.76. It was agreed that the clerk would advise the contractor to contact the Parish Council again once the two remaining contracted cuts have been completed.

113 Members noted the **external auditor's** report on the annual return for the year ended 31st March 2008 which confirmed that the information contained was in accordance with the Audit Commission's requirements and no matters had come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met.

114 The clerk was asked to arrange a meeting of the Personnel Working Party to discuss matters regarding the **Responsible Financial Officer** carried forward from the meeting held on 20th May 2008.

Councillor Reports

115 **Play equipment:** despite a great deal of contact, information on funding for the Bedwell Hey Play Park is still awaited from East Cambridgeshire District Council. The clerk will contact them again and copy in District Councillor Allen.

116 **Community matters:** priorities at the recent Neighbourhood panel meeting were green-laning, fly-tipping and dangerous antisocial behaviour around Rackham school (skateboarding on the roof). Any residents with issues they wish to have brought up in this forum are urged to contact the clerk.

117 **Overhanging branches** /foliage in Main Street, particularly opposite the Merlin Yard development are causing difficulty for pedestrians. This will be reported to Highways Department.

118 It was reported that one arrest had been made with more likely to follow after the recent incident involving an alleged assault on a local resident in **Victoria Green**.

- 119 A local resident had provided information regarding conditions/covenants applying to houses transferred into private ownership by Hereward Housing in the area around 189 Main Street Witchford. This document states “not to keep or allow to be kept on the property any animals or birds other than domestic pets”. Residents are concerned regarding safety and environmental issues arising from **a horse** being kept on the premises and also being kept on open land belonging to East Cambridgeshire District Council at the rear of the row of houses. Following the response from the Enforcement Officer to this matter, the clerk was instructed to contact the District Solicitor regarding this matter.
- 120 **Finance:** It was proposed by Councillor Holdsworth seconded by Councillor Field that the bank reconciliation and the cheques detailed on the cheque schedule be approved.
- 121 Date of next meeting: 3rd September 2008 – all meetings are open to the public.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.10 p.m.

Signed: Chairman

Date: