

Witchford Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 4th March 2009 at 7.30 pm in St Andrew's Church

Present: Mr G Jellicoe (in the chair), Mr I Allen, Mrs S Bromley-Allen, Mr A Shields, Mr N Holdsworth, Mr B Colling, Mr I Brand

Apologies: Mr M Flack-Crane, Mrs D Field, Mr N Cooper, Mrs P Wilson

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

287 **Report from County Councillor:** Councillor Hunt explained that he continues to put his objections to the **Mereham** proposals to the East of England Regional Assembly. He stated that work on the **guided bus** is progressing. He stated that the County Council has now set a 3.9% increase in its budget for the coming year. He stated that although he thought that the proposed **household waste recycling centre** should be situated at Angel Drove he believed it will now be built at the entrance to Witchford and said that Witchford Parish Council should now try to make sure it is of the best quality with the least damage to the area. He stated that he will attend the County planning meeting scheduled for this month and will question the location at that time. He reiterated his concerns regarding the Ely **Masterplan** and was concerned regarding the building of extra houses in Ely without the construction of a southern bypass. He explained that consultation was taking place by the Cambridgeshire Transport Commission regarding **congestion** in Cambridge. He made reference to the expansion of **Lancaster Way** and expressed concern at the traffic this will generate. He expressed concern at proposed closures to **laybys** as discussed at the previous meeting of the parish council (min 269).

Report from District Councillors:

288 Councillor Gareth Wilson reported on budget and financial discussions within the District Council. He stated that's that there would be a **4.5 increase** in East Cambridgeshire District Council's share of Council tax. Councillor Wilson explained new arrangements for the **Angel Drove** car park and stated that unfortunately from June a bus will no longer be available. He explained that Section 106 agreements were still being negotiated regarding the expansion of **Lancaster Way**. He was extremely concerned at the number of vehicles projected to use the business park (quoted as an additional 6,000 cars as well as commercial vehicles).

289 Councillor Allen gave further information regarding his objections to the process regarding the Ely **Masterplan** and stated that the recently issued Masterplan newsletter did not appear to give the full facts. He was very concerned about traffic using the **Lancaster Way** Business Park and felt that the District Council had not wisely used its powers of negotiation in the planning process which is likely to result in lack of provision of necessary infrastructure. Parish Councillors felt that a direct road from the A10 could have been negotiated.

290 Councillor Gareth Wilson reported on Councillor Pauline Wilson's attendance at the leisure centre working party and that it seems likely that a replacement for the **Paradise** complex will be at the Downham Road site and projected to be ready by 2012. Councillor Allen commented on his understanding that there will be no subsidy for its use and that fees and charges to users are likely to be increased.

- 291 No declarations of interest were noted. The **minutes** of the Parish Council meeting held on 4th February 2009 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Vice-Chairman.
- 292 It was noted that Mr Andrew Cardwell has resigned as a Parish Councillor. The **vacancy** has been advertised and reported to the Returning Officer and it should soon be possible to take steps towards co-option of a new member. Anybody interested in standing as a Parish Councillor should contact the clerk for more information.
- 293 A letter from Cambridgeshire Transport Commission regarding extended consultation on **congestion** in Cambridge was noted.
- 294 A letter from a resident at the eastern end of the village was noted regarding problems with **flooding** of her and her neighbour's gardens with water running off the field behind the properties. The clerk was instructed to write explaining that there was formerly a pond on the site of the property and saying that the Parish Council was unable to offer any advice in this matter.
- Planning:**
- 295 09/00123/FUL – **wind turbine** on mast 12 mtrs high - 17 Barton Close. Concerns regarding noise, impact on neighbours, scale and location within the site. If land is agricultural land then this is not a domestic installation but commercial and out of character with the area. The Parish Council requests that this application be referred to a planning committee and that the District Council develops and publishes a policy on wind turbines within villages.
- 296 The County Council Planning Meeting to discuss the proposed **household waste recycling centre** has been deferred until 23rd March 2009. A letter was noted giving the County's comments on objections put forward and asking for comments on this by 12th March 2009. It was agreed that a working party of Councillors Jellicoe, Allen, Holdsworth, Flack-Crane and Mr J Carter would meet at 7.30 p.m. on 10th March to discuss this matter.
- 297 A letter was noted from **Ely Schools Partnership** asking for a contribution to funding of a careers event for year 5 primary pupils from local schools. This matter had been deferred from the previous meeting when it was agreed that the clerk would speak to the Head of Rackham School to ascertain his view. Following consultation with Mr Wales it was agreed that on this occasion a donation would not be made.
- 298 A report was noted from the professional risk assessor regarding the **playparks** and action has been taken regarding several minor recommendations.
- 299 A response was noted from the County Council regarding **buses** taking youngsters to and from the village college passing through the village and causing concern regarding the safety of children in the area of Rackham School. The County state that once the children are dropped off at the Village College then the buses are no longer working under contract so there is nothing can be done. The clerk was instructed to write to the County asking that this opinion be confirmed in writing
- 300 A note was received from Open Spaces Group regarding the proposed work on the **pond** in Victoria Green. It has not proved possible to proceed with previous arrangements for this and it was reported that this can be done at a cost of £300 by a contractor recommended by an ex Head Warden of Wicken Fen. It was agreed that authority be given for this work to go ahead as soon as possible.
- 301 The date of the **Annual Parish Meeting** was confirmed as 15th April 2009. It was agreed that the Parish Council meeting in **June** would be brought forward to Tuesday, 2nd in view of elections later in the week.

- 302 Truelink have confirmed that prices for **grass** cutting will increase slightly this year – as allowed in the contract. The Responsible Financial Officer has been provided with the information. It was noted that the full width cut of Sandpit Drove should continue as far as the bypass rather than stopping at the end of Sparrowhawk Way and the clerk will inform the contractor of this.
- 303 It was reported at the last meeting that some work has been carried out next to **The Plantation** by the new owners of The Bungalow and it was noted that the Plantation is part of the byway. (minute 281) The clerk was instructed to write to the occupiers of the property stating that the Parish Council had noted that they appear to have continued the planting of laurels on byway land which is looked after by the Parish Council.
- 304 The gates have been removed from the **wood** for guilding. Once this is complete then Mr Richardson will put in new posts. It was noted that a telephone pole has been installed without consultation on Parish Council land near the entrance to the wood. The clerk was instructed to write stating that if the pole is damaged by work being carried out then the Parish Council will not accept any responsibility for this.
- 305 Discussion took place on an ash tree on the boundary of the **Millennium wood** which a neighbour had requested be removed. The East Cambridgeshire District Council Trees Officer and the Parish Tree Warden had visited the site with the clerk. A report is awaited from the Trees Officer who has indicated her willingness to speak with the local resident if necessary. This matter will be referred to the Parish Council Woodland Group which meets in April.
- 306 The County Council Locality Manager has confirmed that she is shortlisting for a Youth Work Co-ordinator with interviews next week. The clerk was instructed to contact the **Youth Club** regarding the pool table which was removed from St Andrew's Hall whilst the work was taking place.
- 307 **Scouts** have reported that work is almost complete on the rebuild of their lavatories at the Scout Hut.
- 308 A letter was noted from **Brownies** asking Parish Councillors to a party which is part of the One Planet Challenge.
- 309 **Finance:** It was proposed by Councillor Bromley-Allen, seconded by Councillor Colling that the bank reconciliation, report on unspent provisions and the cheques detailed on the cheque schedule be approved.
- 310 Date of next meeting: 1st April 2009 – in St Andrew's Hall.
All Parish Council meetings are open to the public.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.

Signed: Chairman

Date: