

## Witchford Parish Council

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### **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2010 at 7.30 pm in St Andrew's Hall**

**Present:** Mr I Allen (in the chair), Mr H Palmer, Mrs S Bromley-Allen, Mr T King, Mr G Matthias, Mrs D Field, Mr G Barber, Mrs L Langley

**Apologies:** Mr G Jellicoe, Mr A Shields, Mr I Brand, Mr W Hunt, Mr G Wilson, Mrs P Wilson

- 287 There were no declarations of interest.
- 288 The **minutes** of the Parish Council meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2010 and the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2010 were taken as read, approved and were signed by the Chairman.
- 289 A response was noted from the County Council regarding cutting of vegetation in the **safeway** between Common Road and right of way 10 in which they state that their policy is not to cut hedgerows between February and August. They will inspect the safe-way again at the end of the summer and consider carrying out maintenance then.
- 290 It was agreed that Councillors Jellicoe, Allen and Palmer will meet to formulate the response of the Parish Council to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough **Minerals and Waste Plan** – the consultation ends on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2010.
- 291 It was agreed that Councillors Jellicoe, Allen and Palmer will complete the Cambridgeshire Horizons **Green Vision** stakeholder consultation.
- 292 A request was discussed for a donation to a newly set up choir – **Witchford Voices**. The request detailed the expenditure necessary in setting up the choir. Members discussed this at length as the Parish Council would not normally fund a group such as this for adults. It was agreed that a donation of £200 be made as a one off payment for the initial setting up of the group.
- 293 A complaint was noted from a local resident regarding the lateness of the **Witchfordian**. The Parish Council will pass this complaint on to the editor. Some Parish Councillors deliver the Witchfordian and pointed out that volunteers are not always in a position to deliver the magazines as soon as they are delivered to them. It was reiterated that the Witchfordian is an independent publication. (The Parish Council makes a donation to the Witchfordian each year as a contribution towards the publication of the minutes and other Parish Council information as the Parish Council believes this is a cost effective way of communicating with residents of the village.) The clerk will contact the writer to explain the above.
- 294 East Cambridgeshire District Council had responded to the Parish Council's query regarding the area of land used as a car park at the entrance to **Victoria Green**. They state that on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2009 their Asset Management Committee agreed to transfer the car parking area to Mr and Mrs Wan on the basis that the car park will remain as a car parking area and no building or development may take place on the area. They ask for a plan showing the location of the Parish Council's noticeboard and interpretation board as they believe it is important that they check "whether these are in fact on the land to be transferred." The clerk was instructed to send a plan to East Cambridgeshire District Council and to ask exactly what area is to be sold, what conditions would apply to any sale, to ask for confirmation that full public access would remain and that maintenance of the area including shrubs etc would continue as at present. The Parish Council objects to this sale as the land was acquired by the

District Council under section 106 arrangements and would like to know under what powers the District Council intends to sell this land.

- 295 The Parish Council has expressed an interest in participating in a new project to create permanent **woodlands** across the district. Two possible areas of land have been identified: one piece is The Old Recreation Ground and the second is adjacent to this and is in private ownership. The District Council state that there has been a high response to this project and a meeting is to be held on 27<sup>th</sup> March at The Grange Ely. It is hoped that the Parish Council will send two representatives to this meeting.

296 **Report from District Councillor**

Councillor Allen started his report by complimenting Councillor Hunt on his recent activities within the District Council when discussions on budgets and the Masterplan have taken place. Councillor Allen stated that Councillor Hunt spoke against the Ely Masterplan stating that he believed the County's transport advice was being ignored and expressed his concern that an overall figure for cuts in the staffing budget was given to members but no details were provided of where cuts were to be made. Councillor Allen confirmed that the work to improve the junction of Grunty Fen Road and Main Street had been completed by the County Council who met the full cost of this work. He explained that almost 6000 signatures had been received on a petition regarding the retention of provision of market stalls in Ely. He stressed that the next 12/18 months would be extremely difficult financially for the District Council.

**Planning**

- 297 09/00829/FUL – 2 storey extension, **16 Barton Close** – information was noted from the District Council that this application was not valid.
- 298 Councillor Allen had received confirmation from the Planning Department that building works at **29 Main Street** were taking place in accordance with approved plans. The clerk will pass the drawings to Councillor Barber who will check these.
- 299 Work is going ahead in trying to secure land for the additional **allotments** to be provided and the notes of the working party meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> February were read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record. Two Parish Councillors and the clerk are attending a course on allotment management on 6<sup>th</sup> March. It is hoped that a meeting will be held with the landowner of the preferred site and it was agreed that Councillors Jellicoe, Brand and Palmer could represent the Parish Council at this meeting.
- 300 Work on the **Village Walks** leaflet is continuing and this will shortly be ready for printing. Three requests for quotations were sent out and two were received. It was agreed to accept the cheapest quotation - which was from Digital Creations and Councillors Jellicoe and King were authorised to liaise with them on this matter. Three thousand leaflets will be printed.
- 301 Councillor Allen will represent the Parish Council at a meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> March involving Witchford, Wentworth, Witcham, Mepal, Sutton Parish Councils, the County Council and Sustrans (a sustainable transport charity) to discuss the possible extension of the **cycle way** from Mepal to Witchford.
- 302 A letter was noted from the Police regarding the safety of the area outside **Rackham School**. This stated that safety outside the school could be improved greatly by the marking out of a dedicated parking bay for the school bus – as agreed at the meeting with the Parish Council and the Headteacher. A meeting has now taken place with the County Council who have agreed that it will be possible to create a "bus stand" for the downloading and collection of children at Rackham. This should avoid the requirements of a Traffic Regulation Order and should reduce the projected cost to around £500 which will include road marking and signage. The County Council will contribute its time to facilitate the paperwork but has no budget for the actual works. They will write to the school to see if funding might be available from them. The

proposal would need to go to consultation and will then be presented to the Area Joint Committee in the summer – Councillor Allen will attend this meeting.

- 303 A report was noted from the professional risk assessor regarding the **playparks** and action has been taken regarding several minor recommendations. Repairs to the swings at Bedwell Hey Lane have been ordered at a cost of £105.28. Councillor Barber will check the assessor's comments regarding the Common Road playpark.
- 304 Faulty **street lights** will be reported.
- 305 **Litter** reported to East Cambridgeshire District Council on the approaches to the village has not yet been cleared and the clerk will contact them again.
- 306 Complaints had been received regarding vehicles **parking on pavements**. It was reiterated that this is a matter for the Police and the clerk will pass on the information to them.
- 307 The Chairman has met with the County Council regarding various rights of way. On Byway 7 (**New Road**) continuing into Wilburton byway 14 south of the Catchwater drain, the rutting is such that it is impassable for other than the stoutest off-road vehicle – in some places the ruts are in excess of 3 feet deep. The state of the byway is such that it is not suitable for pedestrians or horses. The County Council will see if funding can be arranged for repair work to the byway in next year's budget.
- 308 **The Youth Club** have advised that they are continuing their attempts to increase numbers attending on Friday evenings.
- 309 The **Village Hall** Steering Group will meet again next week following agreement from the Witchford Playing Fields Association Committee and the Social Club Chairman to continue with discussions.
- 310 It was proposed by Councillor Bromley-Allen seconded by Councillor Barber that the bank reconciliation, the unspent revenue provision and the cheques on the schedule of cheques be approved.
- 311 The next Parish Council meeting will be on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2010. The Annual Parish Meeting will be on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2010.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.57 p.m.

***All Parish Council meetings are open to the public.***

Signed: ..... Chairman

Date: .....