

# Witchford Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs S M Monteith, 174 Main Street, Witchford Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB6 2HT  
Telephone 01353 665707

## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting and the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2009 at 7.30 pm in St. Andrews Hall.

### Present

Mr G Jellicoe (in the chair)  
Mr I Allen  
Mr I Brand  
Mrs S Bromley-Allen  
Mr A Shields  
Mrs D Field

**In attendance:** Mrs S Bowd, County Councillor Hunt, District Councillors G and P Wilson

**Apologies:** Mr M Flack-Crane, Mr B Colling

### 1 Annual General Meeting

#### **Election of Chairman for year 2009/2010**

Mr Jellicoe took the Chair and asked for nominations for Chairman for the forthcoming year. Councillor Jellicoe was duly elected and the declaration of acceptance of office was signed by the new Chairman.

### 2 **Election of Vice-Chairman for year 2009/2010**

Councillor Shields was duly elected.

3 It was noted with regret that Councillor Holdsworth had resigned. The vacancy is now advertised. Once permission of the Returning Officer is received, then steps can be taken to co-opt. This means there are now two **vacancies** on the Parish Council.

4 **Review Hire of Herbage** - Discussion took place regarding the hire of herbage at The Old Recreation Ground. It was agreed to make no change in the charge of £150 at the present time but the clerk was instructed to write to Mr Oakes stating that the field is let for herbage on condition that steps are taken adequately to control any animals kept in the field which should be kept away from the public footpath and the newly constructed pond. It was agreed that an invoice for £20 be sent to Grovemere for rent of herbage at Old Scenes.

5 It was agreed to write to Mrs Field and to Mrs Burroughes and Mrs Robinson thanking them for continuing to give permission for **permissive paths** to be used across their land.

6 The Parish Council's **Risk Assessment** document was noted and approved.

7 The Annual Review of **Internal Audit** was noted and approved. It was agreed once again, if possible, to appoint East Cambridgeshire District Council as internal auditor.

8 The Parish Council's **Financial Regulations** were noted and approved.

9 Discussion took place on appointments to groups and working parties. It was agreed that some vacancies would be kept for new councillors when appointed. The full list is kept by the clerk but councillors appointed for monitoring of various issues are: Councillor Brand - grass cutting; Councillor Field - play equipment; Councillor Colling - street lighting; Open Spaces and Wood - Councillor Jellicoe and Community matters - all Councillors.

### **Parish Council Meeting**

The meeting was addressed by a local resident who spoke regarding his opposition to plans to widen the road outside the proposed household waste recycling centre. He advised the Parish Council that a site meeting with the County Council and interested parties is shortly to be held.

- 10 The **minutes** of the Parish Council Meeting held on 1st April 2009 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman. The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2009 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman.
- 11 **Report from District Councillors:** Councillor Pauline Wilson explained that she had been replaced as Chair of the West Neighbourhood Panel. Councillor Gareth Wilson spoke regarding the District Council Policy and Resources Committee and stated that the Asset Management sub-committee and Delegated Review Panel had been abolished. He explained that changes may be taking place regarding discretionary rate relief.
- 12 **Report from County Councillor:** Councillor Hunt explained that the County Council would robustly oppose any proposals for Mereham. He expressed his concerns regarding the current application for a 17 year extension to the Grunty Fen landfill site. He confirmed his opposition to the introduction of a congestion charge in Cambridge. All District Councillors and the County Councillor were agreed on the need for urgent measures to be taken to control the increase of traffic in the area.
- 13 A letter from local residents regarding a piece of land accessed from Barton Close and running behind Main Street was noted. These residents expressed their concern that this land may be developed by East Cambridgeshire District Council for housing. It was noted that this land does fall within the development envelope and has for many years been identified as a possible site for **affordable housing**. Councillor Allen explained that the District Council had told him that the land has a high market value and that many tens of thousands of pounds have been paid by East Cambridgeshire District Council for the ransom strip needed to gain access to the land. Councillor Allen has been told that the District Council will make a decision whether to develop the land on its own or in conjunction with Sanctuary Hereward or whether to sell on the open market. The Parish Council felt that it was important to have affordable housing in the village for local people. Once any planning application is made then the Parish Council will comment, as a consultee, on this. Local residents will also be consulted at this time by the District Council. The clerk was instructed to forward the letter to David Archer of the District Council.
- 14 It was agreed that £200 would be donated to 1<sup>st</sup> Witchford **Rainbows** as a contribution towards their hall hire charges.
- 15 It was noted that the County Council is formulating a response to the East of England Regional Assembly review of **Regional Spatial Strategy** which EERA says will shape the future of housing and employment growth across the Eastern Region.
- 16 Information was noted from the Equality and Human Rights Commission regarding public sector duties. It was agreed that Councillors Field, Bromley-Allen and the clerk would review and, if necessary, recommend amendments to the Parish Council's equality policy

### **Planning**

- 17 E/03002/09/CW Variation of condition 3 of approved application E/01071/88/CW to state "the infilled area shall be reinstated to a condition suitable for the resumption of agricultural use by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the County Planning Authority" – **Grunty Fen Recycling Centre**. This should be refused because of: inadequate access; time period is excessive; in conflict with Minerals and Waste Plan preferred option. Councillor Allen hopes to attend the County Council planning meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> May.

- 09/00215/FUL – construction of tennis court with wire surround fence – Needhams Farm Barn – withdrawn.
- 09/00200/FUL – loft conversion, porch and conservatory extension – **2 Elm Close** – no objection.
- E/03009/09/CC – East Cambridgeshire **Local Recycling Centre** (Witchford) and associated works – land off Stirling Way, Witchford Road, Ely. The Parish Council was concerned that no document schedule had been received and that some letters referred to in the application appeared to be missing. Information regarding traffic flows was not clear. A resident of Alderforth Farm has concerns regarding the realignment and reconfiguration of the road and the Parish Council supports him in this. The clerk was instructed to ask the County for the missing information and to state that comments would be sent by 22nd May 2009. The Chairman and Councillor Allen would meet to discuss this matter and would circulate their notes to Parish Councillors prior to the Parish Council's response being sent.
- 18 Information from East Cambridgeshire District Council's Enforcement Officer was noted. He is currently enquiring into what appears to be a race track being built in **Grunty Fen**. Although the site is in Wilburton Parish, the clerk has requested that Witchford be consulted on any applications in this area.
- 19 Information was noted from East Cambridgeshire District Council Community Services Department that the Section 106 allocations for Witchford are: Strategic Projects £34720 (District Projects); Local Projects - £54560 and small villages allocation £9920. It was agreed that the District Council be asked to assist in setting up an **audit of facilities** in the village and that up to £400 can be spent on this. It is hoped that a grant can be available to provide the rest of the money.
- 20 The receipts and payments information circulated by the Responsible Financial Officer and the report on significant variations were noted and agreed and the **Annual Return** for the External Auditor was agreed and signed by the Chairman, the RFO and the Clerk. The Council's Internal Auditor has completed a report on the accounts and had stated verbally that no problems have been found.
- 21 The RFO explained the Annual **governance statement** to the Parish Council and this was discussed and agreed.
- 22 Councillor Allen reported on his attendance at a recent meeting of the Cambridgeshire Transport Commission. He spoke of the impact of various developments bringing **greater traffic volumes** and was concerned that nobody appeared to have a complete picture of the impact of this.
- 23 It was agreed that the **Jointly Funded Minor Highways** Improvement 2010/2011 bidding round application be deferred until the next meeting of the Parish Council.
- 24 It was thought that at the moment no new street lights were necessary.
- 25 The clerk will liaise with members of the Personnel Working Party to fix a date for staff **appraisals**.
- 26 It was noted that the **Alderforth access area** is due to close in October 2009.
- 27 The hedge to the bypass side of **Field End** is overgrown and the clerk will report this to the District Council. Some planting on the other side of the road is overgrown – this is the responsibility of local residents and the clerk was instructed to contact them.
- 28 It was reported that **road safety** markings near the school were faded and the clerk was instructed to report this to the County Council.

- 29 The graffiti in **bus shelters** has been reported and this will be cleared off shortly. It was noted that a complaint had been received about a bad smell in the bus shelter near St Andrew's Hall.
- 30 The clerk was instructed to contact the County Council to check on progress with enforcement action regarding **encroachment in byway 7** (New Road).
- 31 A meeting has been arranged with the new Youth Team and it was noted that the Youth Club had advertised its sessions online and in the Witchfordian.
- 32 It was agreed that a letter be sent to **Terry King** to thank him for his work in painting the lettering on the gates to the Millennium wood.
- 33 **Finance:** It was proposed by Councillor Brand, seconded by Councillor Bromley-Allen that the bank reconciliation and the budget review be noted and the cheques on the schedule of cheques be approved.
- 34 **Diary Dates**  
Date of next meeting **Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2009**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.00 p.m.

Signed: .....

Chairman

Date: .....