

WITCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 10 July 2007 at 7.45 pm in the Village Hall, Witcham

Present: D A Bamforth (Chairman) D J Saberton, (Vice Chairman), C Watson

In attendance Mrs S J Bell (Clerk)
A Bailey (ECDC)
T Goodge (ECDC) (joined end of meeting)

4 members of the public (R Finn and M Housden, and later A Berry and J Anderson) who were all interested in joining the Council were also in attendance and apologies were received from Mr K Mackender who was unable to attend due to prior commitment.

Public question time opened at 7.30 pm. Chairman welcomed Mr Finn and Mr Housden.
Verification of payments and receipts took place by Chairman
Full Council business commenced at 7.45pm

Action

07/046 **Apologies for Absence** were received from T Goodge, (ECDC), who had other commitments.

07/047 **Declaration of Interest:** There were none.

07/048 **Minutes of the meeting** of 7 June 2007 had been circulated, and were approved and signed. Proposed by Mr C Watson, seconded Mr D Saberton, and agreed unanimously.

07/049 **Matters Arising**

07/032 Matters Arising - Roundabout at The Orchards. Chairman had been contacted by ECDC and assured they were investigating repairs. Clerk confirmed she had been pushing with contractors and sending information as needs to be done via insurance.

Clerk

07/050 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

07/00647/OUT Park Lane, Market Way Outline application for new 4/5 bed house – demolish existing. No objections.

Clerk

07/00723/FUL 2a Martins Lane. Change of use of land from unused garden area. No objection. Noted ECDC not happy with boarded fence and seeking replacement with hedging. Council would prefer retain fence but plant up in front of fence.

Clerk

07/051 **COUNCILLOR VACANCIES**

Timetable of elections noted. Nominations had been submitted and a poll was expected on 2 August.

Newly elected Councillors will present Declarations of Interest and Acceptance at next Council meeting, scheduled for 11 September (unless an additional meeting for urgent business is required). Proposed Chairman and agreed unanimously.

07/052 **MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT**

Details of the new Code had been circulated over previous months. Chairman proposed adoption of the new Model Code of Conduct including para 12(2) for which rules will be set up, effective from 1 September 2007. Agreed to accept the recommendation from CALC in respect of initial arrangements for para 12(2): 'If a Councillor with a prejudicial interest wishes to speak on an agenda item then that interest and intention must be stated immediately after item 1 on the agenda. The public will be allowed a maximum of six speakers who may provide information for up to three minutes only and each person may only speak once. The Chairman will look to secure a balance of public speakers. The public participation is not be a part of the debate but merely fact giving and answering questions in the same manner as the councillor with the prejudicial interest'.

Clerk

07/052 **MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT** (cont)

Clerk to attend workshop on 27 October. *Clerk*

Clerk to arrange for CALC to notify Standards Board and Monitoring Officer and press notice. Cost £24. Proposed Chairman, seconded Mr C Watson, and agreed unanimously. *Clerk*

07/053 **PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

Chairman reported on meeting with County Council. The Rights of Way team were satisfied with the work and felt they had adequately supervised the contractors. They foresee good grass swath on the drove and this is in-keeping with the Government's initiative to open up public rights of way. Strips will be mown rotationally and there will be wild plants and flowers to create biodiversity. They intend to push owners regarding hedge maintenance. The droves will be closed to vehicles, except landowners, during the winter months to protect the surfaces.

However, this area is a site of special interest with rare butterflies, Elm trees, bats, owls etc. The Forestry Commission, East Cambs District Council, local MP, Wildlife and English Nature have been contacted about the way the contractors have decimated the drove, apparently without thought for wildlife and trees, which included the Elms.

The Chairman opened the meeting to allow the public to speak. The landowners had written to the Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire County Council to intervene. A copy of an aboriginal report commissioned by a landowner was received. (Mr Goodge arrived at 7.55)

Chairman reconvened the meeting. The Council is deeply concerned about the future of the drove and has received some complaints from users. It was agreed to keep under review pending response to the landowners from Ombudsman and County Council Chief Executive. Proposed Chairman, seconded Mr C Watson and agreed unanimously.

Public Rights of Way No.1, High Street/Back Lane vegetation requires cutting back. Clerk to report to County Council. Proposed Chairman and agreed unanimously. *Clerk*

07/054 **RECREATION GROUND**

Land rear 2 Martins Lane and village drive verge: Planning application as considered above. Consent for instructions to be issued to solicitors to progress legal documents re-confirmed. *Clerk/Chairman*

The following requests for use of the recreation ground were approved:

OCYPS – youth activities 7.00 pm to 9.30 pm, Sept 17 and 24, October 1, 8, 15 and 29, November 5, 12 and 13. *Clerk*

Mepal and Witcham Primary School Race Night, 17 July *Clerk*

Grasscutting complaints: Mr David Saberton said he would work with the Groundsman to get the grass cut and a mower repaired. Chairman to cut inside of hedge at cemetery and Mr Pate's contractor to be asked to cut top and outside. *DJS Chairman*

Cricket Nets: Confirmed to include nets on Council insurance policy at just over £13 per annum. Proposed Chairman, seconded Mr D Saberton and agreed unanimously. Noted there would be no additional charge to pay on this year's premium. *Clerk*

Recreation Ground: weekly inspections. Mr D Saberton advised that all checks were satisfactory and new sandbags were being obtained. *DJS*

07/055 **CEMETERY**

New cemetery plan received. Clerk to liaise with draughtsman to plan Garden of Remembrance. *Clerk*

Interment of ashes (Plot 22) approved. Request to replace headstone and additional inscription to be considered when details received from stonemason. *Clerk*

07/056 MOBILE LIBRARY

County Council budget pressures caused by very poor settlement from Government and increasing demand on all services, necessitates mobile library service reducing from 8 vehicles to 6. This will result in amalgamating routes and it is now proposed the unit will be in Witcham at later time of 14:15 to 14:30 (alternate Fridays). Council accepted.

Clerk

07/057 BEST KEPT GARDEN COMPETITION 2007

Judging by Steve and Mary Bramble completed, and presentations to take place on 14 July 2007 at the Pea Shoot. Chairman to contact winners. Clerk to collect shields and purchase miniatures. Bottle of wine to be purchased for judges and escort from Chairman's Allowance. Proposed Chairman and agreed unanimously.

Chairman

Clerk

Chairman

Also agreed to purchase flowers from Chairman's Allowance for Beryl Saberton to thank her for her services to the village as caretaker and bookings clerk for the Village Hall. Beryl had carried out this role for many years and retired a little earlier in the year. Proposed Chairman and agreed unanimously.

Chairman

07/058 PARISH PLAN

Clerk reported that the working party had advised there had been no amendments to the Plan and Mrs C Hill would now complete the Action Plan. Grant monies to be finalised after printing and final expenses determined.

Clerk

07/059 JOINTLY FUNDED MINOR HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENTS SCHEME 2008/9 BIDDING ROUND

Confirmed submit bids for cycleway and speed reduction measures as in previous years. Proposed Chairman and agreed unanimously.

Clerk

07/060 COMMUNITY POLICE

Noted that car and motorbike racing still taking place at the Elean Business Centre and causing noise nuisance.

Clerk

07/061 REPORTS OF MEETINGS

Clerk reported on VAT workshop 27 June 2007.

CPALC AGM 10 November at St Ives for Councillors.

All

07/062 STREET LIGHTING AND HIGHWAYS

Clerk to pursue additional quotes and investigate funding for replacement street light at Park Lane.

Clerk

Clerk to contact County Council regarding missing street light in The Slade which was removed and cables taped when water main burst earlier this year.

Clerk

07/063 CORRESPONDENCE

ECDC Agendas and minutes circulated.

All

CCC East Area Highways staffing temporary changes noted.

Patient and Public Involvement in Health. Volunteers required, details posted on noticeboard.

07/064 PUBLICATIONS CIRCULATED

CCC Trading Standards – 'Inside Trade'

)

ACRE Community Action

)

NALC Local Council Review

) All

CALC Bulletin

)

07/065 **FINANCE**

Quarterly bank reconciliation and review of budgets received, checked and accepted. Balance at 30 June 2007 £27,837. May review allocation of reserves at a later date. Proposed Chairman and agreed unanimously.

The following Receipts and Payments were approved.

		£	£	£
Receipts	CALC QPC hours	189.34		189.34
Payments	000855 East Cambs DC Election	50.00		50.00
	000856 Clerks Salary 561 & Exp Apr-Jun 58.15	619.15		619.15
	000857 CPALC Code Conduct Adoption	24.00		24.00
	d/d Talk Talk	2.22	0.38	2.60

07/066 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 11 September 2007 (subject to not requiring an additional meeting for planning applications or other urgent issues.) 7.30 open to public and checking of payments and receipts. Business to commence at 7.45 pm.

October meeting to be re-scheduled as Chairman and Clerk have other engagements they must attend to.

Any business and payments, to be considered at Parish Council meeting must be delivered to the Clerk for inclusion on the agenda at least 6 clear days prior to the meeting.

All

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.10 pm

Signed Dated