

WITCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 13 November, 2007 at 7.45 pm in the Village Hall, Witcham

Present: D A Bamforth (Chairman), D J Saberton (Vice Chairman), J Anderson, A Berry, K Mackender, C Watson

In attendance Mrs S J Bell (Clerk)
Cllr A Bailey (ECDC)
Cllr P Read (CCC)

There were no members of the public present for open question time, nor present during the meeting. Verification of payments and receipts took place by Chairman and Mr C Watson. Full Council business commenced at 7.45 pm.

Action

07/103 **Apologies for Absence** were received from Cllr T Goodge

07/104 **Declaration of Interest:** There were none

07/105 **Minutes of the meeting** of 16 October had been circulated, and were approved and signed. Proposed by Mr K Mackender and seconded by Mr C Watson, and agreed unanimously.

07/106 **REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES**

Cllr A Bailey, East Cambs District Council, gave an up-date on the progress on the Public Inquiry regarding Mereham and the future of ADeC.

(Mrs J Anderson arrived at 8.00pm)

Cllr P Read, County Council, advised that he was heavily involved with issues regarding Northstow. He spoke of his involvement regarding complaints about clearing the droves at Witcham and Pymore and hoped there would be better communication with parishes in future. The Chairman presented notes of the meeting held on 2 November 2007 between landowners at Bury Road, County Council representatives and the local MP, Mr Malcolm Moss. There appeared to still be unresolved issues regarding the awarded width of the drove and observation of its status as a Site of Natural History Interest.

Cllr A Bailey explained a little about the Neighbourhood Panels and confirmed Witcham should be eligible to elect a representative to attend. Further details will be discussed at the Parish Forum on 19 November.

Cllrs P Read and A Bailey left the meeting.

07/107 **Matters Arising**

07/091 *Ely Car Parking:* Letter of 16 October from ECDC received, and noted consultation process had been by public notice in the press. The charges of £2.50 per day to park at Angel Drove was said to reflect the significant investment, circa £1m, and had been set to 'pay back' and, of course, was comparable to parking charges at the railway station. Parking restrictions at other car parks had been imposed to encourage commuters to use the new car park thereby freeing up spaces for those coming into the City.

07/095 *Cemetery:* Mr D Saberton had removed the gates and taken for re-painting.

07/108 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

E/06/00749/FUL Construction of 2-storey 4bed house – modified proposals (retrospective) – bathroom and ensuite windows replaced with velux roof windows for fire safety issues. Bricked window and sill now on this wall. Changes to fencing to 1.5m close boarded fence set 1.5m from side boundary allowing for hedge planning to soften view of bricks. No objection to these retrospective changes. (See previous submissions regarding interests).

The Council noted the following refusal:

07/00989/OUT 25 Silver Street, single storey dwelling – refused.

07/109 EAST CAMBS LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Documents and summary previously circulated to Councillors. Further comments to be submitted via Chairman for response to District Council by 30 November 2007. Proposed Chairman and agreed unanimously.

All

07/110 ECDC NEIGHBOURHOOD PANELS

See 07/106. Appointment of representative deferred until after meeting on 19 November.

07/111 PARISH PLAN

Councillors had reviewed the action plan from which the following items had been prioritised:

Repair and repaint bus shelter

Install dog poop bag dispenser

Investigate installation of gates by field used for dog walking
(between The Slade/Park Lane)

Expected costs approximately £2100. Proposed Chairman and agreed unanimously.

07/112 REVIEW OF BUDGETS AND SETTING OF PRECEPT 2008/9

Reports circulated at previous meeting reviewed. Agreed to phase in above projects (Minute 007/111) over the next year or so. After careful consideration and discussion it was agreed to increase the Precept to £10,000. Proposed Chairman, seconded Mr C Watson and agreed unanimously. This includes £1000 for another year of provision of Youth facilities.

Clerk

07/113 EDF ENERGY STATION LEASE

Clerk had negotiated with EDF to increase rent to £50 per annum on a 21year lease with 3 yearly reviews based on RPI. Acceptance proposed by Mr K Mackender, seconded Mrs J Anderson and agreed unanimously.

Clerk

07/114 RECREATION GROUND AND VILLAGE HALL FACILITIES

RoSPA report and monthly inspection of equipment. Mr D Saberton to lay grass under gates to fill gaps. He reported some loose bolts on the multi-play unit, which he would glue.

DS

New equipment deferred. Mr D Saberton had spoken to Groundsman regarding his difficulties in having time to undertake his duties. In the meantime Councillors Saberton, Bamforth and Watson had continued undertake the grasscutting and emptying of bins. Mr D Saberton to speak to Groundsman again to seek confirmation of his intentions for the future and to inform Clerk.

DS

Mrs Anderson reported that the ‘no-smoking’ sign had been removed from the bus shelter. A further notice to be obtained and put inside the noticeboard in accordance with recent national prohibition of smoking in public buildings. Proposed Chairman and agreed unanimously.

Clerk

Land rear 2 Martins Lane and Village Hall drive verge – ongoing with solicitors.

Clerk

07/115 PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

Bury Road – see Minute 07/106, Report from County Councillor and receipt of notes from meeting of 2 November.

07/116 DOG WALKING – LAND BETWEEN THE SLADE AND PARK LANE

Mrs J Anderson reported horses being ridden through field where dogs are exercised and was concerned about safety of riders since dogs are often off the leash. The land is privately owned but understood to be open to the public under a DEFRA Stewardship scheme. Not known if the land should be accessible to horses. Tenant to be contacted. Proposed Chairman and agreed unanimously.

*Clerk/
Chairman*

07/117 CEMETERY

See 07/107 Matters Arising.

Clerk awaiting new plan.

Clerk

07/118 COMMUNITY POLICE

Chairman reported that there was difficulty maintaining the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and he had spoken to the PCSO, and a new co-ordinator was required. Chairman proposed Councillors make enquiries to see if anyone in the parish would be willing to take this on so that a new effort could be launched. Agreed by all.

All

07/119 REPORTS OF MEETINGS

The Clerk reported on the CALC Code of Conduct training session on 27 October, and notes and handouts were distributed to Councillors for their future guidance.

All

07/120 STREET LIGHTS AND HIGHWAYS

Clerk to report broken glass lamp at Martins Lane and light at The Slade obscured by trees. Proposed Chairman and agreed unanimously.

Clerk

07/121 CORRESPONDENCE

The following were received and noted

ECDC/CPALC Joint Parish Forum meeting 19 November 2007 – previously circulated
CCC Review of Passenger Transport in Cambridgeshire – previously circulated
CCC Contracted Bus Service – nil of note for Witcham

07/122 PUBLICATIONS FOR CIRCULATION

CALC Bulletin -October previously circulated
Copy of the Council's Policies and Procedures was circulated to new Councillors prior to the Meeting: Standing Orders and Chairmanship, Finance Regulations, Publication Scheme, Handling Complaints, Crime and Disorder Policy, Disability Discrimination Policy and Race Relations Policy. These will be linked to the new Archiving Policy currently under review.

All

07/123 FINANCE

The audited Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2007 was received and accepted from the External Auditor. Conclusion of Audit notice had been posted on the parish noticeboard on 29 October 2007 by the Clerk

07/123 **FINANCE** (cont)

The following Receipts and Payments were approved. Proposed by the Chairman and seconded Mr C Watson and agreed unanimously

			£	£	£
Receipts	Nil				
Payments	000868	Moore Stephens - External Audit Fees	135.00		
		Extra charges Audit Commission and Management time	540.00	118.13	793.13
	000869	Mepal Stores Ltd What's On S142 General copying	13.50 4.18	3.09	20.77
	000870	Witcham Youth Club Facility Apr – Sep07	500.00		500.00
	000871	Reimburse Clerk expenses including Code of Conduct Training	80.68		80.68

07/124 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 4 December 2007 commencing at 7.30 pm for monthly check of payments and receipts and 'open to the public' time. Business to commence at 7.45 pm.

Any business and payments, to be considered at a 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.

Signed Dated