

WITCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Additional Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 1 October 2019 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, Witcham

Present: M Housden (Chairman), K Mackender (Vice-Chair), J Bibby, L Holdaway, J Lucas

In attendance Mrs S J Bell (Clerk)
 L Duprè -County and District Councillor
 M Inskip – District Councillor
 E Grima – Commercial Director East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC)
 H Wilson – Anglian Water (AW)

No members of public present

Action

19/188 **Apologies for Absence:** There were none.

19/189 **To receive any declarations of interest**
 Councillors to declare any pecuniary interests in any items on the agenda - none
 Councillors to declare any personal interests in any items on the agenda.- M Housden – Kings of Witcham (consultee) and J Lucas – 11A The Orchards (consultee)
 Councillors to declare any prejudicial interests None

19/190 **Dispensations:**
 To note any new Dispensations granted: Nil

19/191 **Public Participation:** M Housden wished to speak regarding agenda item 19/192 Kings of Witcham development in The Slade. He read out a letter he had sent to the ECDC Planning Department regarding concerns about height and there being no plans/diagrams to show impact on 6 and 8 The Slade, and drainage issues. He would be speaking as a resident of The Slade at the Planning Committee meeting.

19/192 **Planning Applications**
Kings of Witcham (various reference numbers)
 M Housden declared an interest and K Mackender took the Chair. K Mackender welcomed the representatives from ECDC and AW and opened the meeting for discussion. M Housden withdrew from the table to listen to the representatives.
 K Mackender said the Council was generally supportive of the development but there had been a number of concerns. The application had been approved without full details and these had been put through on a piecemeal basis making it difficult to follow and meaning there had been issues coming to light, which if known about at the time of the original determination, would have raised concerns earlier. There had been no pictures to clearly demonstrate the impact of those houses that had been raised (soil level) on the surrounding bungalows.

E Grima confirmed that the ground level had been raised as part of the mitigation work to deal with contamination, by digging out, lining, refilling to a higher level with fresh soil; therefore the visual height will have increased by 60cm. It was normal practice to discharge conditions without going to Planning Committee. There is an expiration date for dealing with discharge of conditions and if the planning department did not deal with the conditions before that expiry date they were automatically discharged.

The Parish Council was concerned that there was insufficient evidence and research for decisions. E Grima advised that the County Council leads on flood prevention. The Parish Council was concerned that sewerage and flooding had not been properly examined. L Holdaway reported that in recent times sewage smells were coming up at the bottom of Headleys Lane.

Planning Applications

Kings of Witcham (various reference numbers)

H Wilson advised that Anglian Water was not a consultee by statute but did engage with the planning department at ECDC. They responded on developments of 10 or more dwellings so in this case had not. However, if the Parish Council wanted to engage Anglian Water they could be contacted and AW would respond to them. AW examines the capacity of the network within the existing circumstances, how many dwellings are proposed, the topography, whether there is pumping facilities or gravity, the entry points into the system etc. On the proposed development 5 would be gravity and 3 pumped part way and then gravity. This information would then be considered to decide if the proposed development would be detrimental to the existing system and users. Foul sewage flooding incidents at The Slade, due to blockages and excessive rain was discussed. Upon receipt of an incident AW categorises the issue as blockage and maintenance or storm. Storm was not a growth issue so did not score capacity points.

H Wilson asked to address M Housden for further information on the sewage flooding in the gardens at The Slade and he returned to the table to give further explanation. He advised that there was an attenuating chamber at 21 and the flooding was usually experienced after heavy rainpour but there had been some instances of blockages caused by nappies, wet wipes etc. He understood AW operatives did come out to check the chamber from time to time. The pipes, having been installed in the 1960s, were small. Tankers did come in to desludge. M Housden withdrew from the table.

The Parish Council asked how many more houses could the existing system take before it was up to full capacity. H Wilson advised that in determining capacity AW takes into account all development. There is high strategic planning, calculation of impact and solutions for mitigation. AW worked with developers and planners and was responsible for the investment and future management of the system, and ensures compliance with Environment Agency requirements to avoid pollution.

The Parish Council asked for assurances that the current developments in Witcham would not cause detriment to the system. H Wilson advised that if the Parish Council asked them to look at planning applications (when under 10) they could ask for more information and would err on the side of caution to manage risks. She confirmed that AW would look at existing issues and let the Council know what the causes were and what could be done etc. She would also look into foul sewer smells at Headleys Lane and poor water pressure. It was understood surface water from the Kings development site was to be discharged into the ditch on the southern side so not discharged to AW assets. Noted that the site included provision for storm water holding tanks. The County Council was the Lead Local Flood Authority.

AW

K Mackender asked why the planning procedures for getting in and processing information was not more rigorous so that potential issues could be identified at the onset. There should be no surprises.

District Councillor L Duprè gave a summary of events pertaining to the application, which had received consent in 2015 subject to reserved matters. During the interim of 4 years and 3 months many reports had been submitted and issues come to light, including remediation measures for the contamination and the subsequent need to raise the ground level by 600mm.

E Grima said she would ask the Planning Manager to attend a meeting with the Council to discuss the planning procedure and process used by Planning Officers and improve engagement. She would contact the Clerk with more information. H Wilson would contact the Clerk with more information.

ECDC

8.26pm K Mackender thanked E Grima and H Wilson and they left the meeting.

There was further discussion and points drafted for representative to take to the Planning Committee meeting on 2 October 2019.

9.00pm The open session was closed

**Planning Applications
Kings of Witcham (various reference numbers)**

Resolved that K Mackender, supported by L Holdaway, would represent the Parish Council at the ECDC Planning Committee meeting on 2 October to put forward the Council’s views and concerns regarding this latest variation application, for changes in floor and land levels. Proposed J Lucas, seconded L Holdaway. (M Housden abstained).

KM/LH

District Councillor L Duprè confirmed she would attend the meeting to support the Parish Council, for which she was thanked.

9.08 M Housden returned to the Chair

19/01341/FUL 11A The Orchards, Garage conversion.

At this point J Lucas declared an interest as a consultee.

Plans examined and noted that one neighbour had written to ECDC supporting the application.

Resolved that the Council had no concerns on this application. Proposed K Mackender, seconded Chair. (J Lucas abstained).

Clerk

J Lucas returned to the table

19/193 **.Litterpick - October 2019**

Village litterpick co-ordinator was proposing holding a litterpick on Saturday 12 October 2019.

Resolved that the Council agree to the Village litterpick co-ordinator arranging a litterpick on Saturday 12 October. Proposed by Chair, seconded K Mackender
Clerk to thank the co-ordinator. Several Councillors confirmed they would attend to help on the day.

Clerk

19/194 The meeting closed at 9.10pm

Signed.....

Dated