

## WITCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 11 March 2007 at 7.45 pm in the Village Hall, Witcham

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**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)

Public question time opened at 7.30 pm – 1 member of the public present  
1 member of public present during meeting.

Full Council business commenced at 7.45 pm

Action

08/036 **Apologies for Absence** There were none.

08/037 **Declaration of Interests** There were none.

08/038 **DATA CENTRE AND ECO-VILLAGE – ELEAN BUSINESS PARK**

The Chairman welcomed representatives from Lasercharm who gave a presentation and answered questions. The 65,000sq m Data Centre is to provide employment for up to 1000 people based on 3 shift cycles, 7 days. Hope to have end-users signed up by September and start building January 2009. £150m to build and £600m to kit out. Planning decision expected shortly.

A 450 unit Eco-Village based on Cambridgeshire style houses including 14 thatched proposed. Integrated mix of large executive to shared equity/rented social housing (35%), arranged around square including pub, shop, post office and community facilities to try to emulate range of activities as enjoyed at Sutton. Developer plans to subsidise for 3 years to help sustain until established. Locals may be interested in running shop/post office but developer will support whatever local people feel their needs are. Heating requirements will be supplied by excess heat from strawburner by absorption cooling system.

Recognised problems:

Sewerage – issue for Mepal, and Engineers are investigating.

Traffic volumes – roundabout for access to site off A142 just before Mepal, and could incorporate roundabout at Witcham Toll. Councillors believe traffic calming measures will be required through Witcham to ensure traffic does not cut through and cause problems at The Slade/Martins Lane/Mepal Road. Developer to provide calculations for expected traffic.

Of this 56 acre site, only 15 acres will be developed, the rest will be left in Trust to the people of the Eco-Village as a green site. Future development here would be dependent on all the residents' consent.

Council concerned about traffic volumes and thought it unlikely that workers would all want to live on site as many would want social and arts facilities provided by bigger towns, eg Ely and Cambridge.

The Chairman thanked the representatives who then left the meeting at 8.15pm

08/039 **PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY (Droves)**

The Chairman welcomed Kate Day and Karen Whymark of CCC Public Rights of Way, who attended to outline current progress with maintaining droves and gating arrangements proposed for winter season 2008/09 under Traffic Regulations Order. Information had previously been circulated to Councillors direct from CCC for comment. Scrub/surface cuts carried out on Bury Road, and intend full width cut each spring and winter with alternating half strip clearance in summer. Keys for gates will be issued, and signed for with conditions, to those landowners who need access to land whilst the droves are gated during the winter months. (October to April).

08/039 **PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY (Droves) (cont)**

Damage to droves must be rectified immediately under the conditions imposed. Councillors were concerned this could be unworkable as it would be impossible to roll the droves to remove ruts until drier conditions in Spring but Karen Whymark was adamant that this constituted criminal damage and the droves, as public rights of way, must remain usable to the public. This could be a serious issue for those landowners needing to remove crops from October onwards, eg sugar beet. The CCC could not continue to use taxpayers' money to maintain the droves for private use of landowners. Names of local landowners who use fields for agricultural use noted, and CCC to contact these landowners to sort out issues. Parish Council will be issued with a map indicating location of gates. CCC

P3 Scheme. Kate Day and Karen Whymark confirmed interest in supporting the Parish Council regarding proposals for footpath and dog-walking field between The Slade and Headleys Lane with erection of kissing gates, subject to working with landowners. Mr A Berry, P3 Co-ordinator to lead. Chairman reported that the Committee of the now disbanded Witcham Produce Show is distributing reserves and may contribute to costs. CCC  
AB

The Chairman thanked the representatives who left the meeting at 8.55pm, together with District and County Councillors.

08/040 **Minutes of the meeting** of 12 February 2008 had been circulated, and were approved and signed. Proposed by Mr D Saberton, seconded Mr C Watson, and agreed. (Chairman abstained)

08/041 **Matters Arising**

*08/027 Requests for Funding.* Church Treasurer had advised that grant for replacement mower was no longer required but thanked the Council for their kind consideration of this request.

08/042 **REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES**

There were no issues to report.

08/043 **RECREATION GROUND AND VILLAGE HALL FACILITIES**

Mr D Saberton confirmed receipt of resignation letter from Groundsman and will forward to Clerk. DJS

Mr Saberton to contact Mr P Walker to arrange seasonal mowing, including provision of equipment. Clerk to confirm £10ph, max 4hrs per week as necessary. Quotations for hover mower received and agreed Mr Saberton make arrangements with Mr Walker for selection and purchase, maximum £450. Proposed Mr K Mackender, seconded by Mrs J Anderson and agreed unanimously. DJS

Mr Saberton had no issues to report on monthly inspections of play area/recreation ground equipment. Noted RoSPA Annual Inspection planned for April. Mr Saberton reported complaints regarding graffiti and food containers disposed at bus shelter. A vehicle had also been driven around recreation ground. Clerk to liaise with PCSO to arrange for a note to go in "What's On" stating that this behaviour is unacceptable and any evidence will be presented to the police as it is criminal damage. Mr K Mackender and Mr A Berry kindly undertook to re-paint internal walls of bus shelter to cover graffiti. Clerk

Land rear and side 2 Martins Lane. Legal documents received and amendments discussed. Clerk to respond. Consent given for Chairman to sign revised document as soon as it is received back from solicitors. Clerk

08/044 **COMMUNITY POLICE**

Noted that PCSO is aware of recent events at the crossroads as above and would like incidents reported so that more evening police patrols could be arranged. All

08/045 **REPORTS OF MEETINGS**

Mr A Berry had attended the P3 Scheme meeting on 1 March at Shire Hall which included a talk by the Wildlife Trust and legal implications in respect of Public Rights of Way. Mr Berry was thanked.

08/046 **STREET LIGHTING AND HIGHWAYS**

CCC5 Silver Street not functioning.

Clerk

08/047 **CORRESPONDENCE**

The following were received and noted

EPR Community Liaison Committee – 8 April 2008 at 7.00pm (clashes with next Council meeting)

Information Commissioner's Office – renewal of subscription – Data Protection

CCC Speed Limit Policy and reviews; change highways dept staff

ECDC Planning – The Chestnuts, Ely Road, confirmed clarification that the Council was content for final determination of the application to rest with Planning Service and noted that ECDC were concerned about the 7m height of the building. Councillors had expressed wish to protect landscape.

ECDC Parish Consultation on Improvement Plan – details circulated and comments to be passed back to Clerk to meet ECDC deadline of 8 April.

All

08/048 **FINANCE**

The following Receipts and Payments were presented, checked and approved. Proposed by Chairman and agreed unanimously.

			£	£	£
Receipts	Nil				
Payments	000884	Clerks Salary Oct – Mar 1148.40 plus cost of living award back-dated to 1 April 2007 in accordance with NALC recommendations Reimbursement expenses, stationery 97p, Nov – Mar postage £11.82 and copying April – Mar £12.71	1199.59		1199.59
	000885	D Saberton reimbursement petrol	15.00		15.00
	d/d	Information Commissioner DP renewal	35.00		35.00
	d/d	Talk Talk Feb	3.45	.60	4.05

The following outstanding invoices were noted and consent given to make settlement before next meeting to meet closure of current financial year.

CCC new Street Light	1130.21
Mepal Stores Mar What's On s.142	13.50
Mepal Stores Copying Parish Plan	169.80
Witcham Village Hall – hire fees	120.00
Witcham Cricket Club 2007 grasscutting	375.00
Grasscutting - equipment max £450 plus expenses	

Bank reconciliation and receipts and payments to 31 Dec 07, and Clerks hours to early March circulated.

08/049 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 8 April 2008 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.

All business to be considered 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 9.55pm

Signed ..... Dated .....