

WITCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 16 October, 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)

There were no members of the public present for open question time, nor present during the meeting. Full Council business commenced at 7.45pm.

- Action
- 07/087 **Apologies for Absence** were received from T Goodge and A Bailey who were attending a full Council Meeting of the District Council.
- 07/088 **Declaration of Interest:** There were none.
- 07/089 **Minutes of the meeting** of 11 September 2007 had been circulated, and were approved and signed. Proposed by Mr C Watson and seconded by Mr D Saberton, and agreed unanimously.
- 07/090 **Matters Arising**
- 07/072 Mereham Development* - Clerk had requested a slot to speak at Public Inquiry at Haddenham. A slot had been offered for 23 October, time to be confirmed. Mrs Anderson gave apologies and advised this was not a suitable date as she had other business commitments that day. Chairman to check his diary to see if he could attend.
- JA
Chairman
- 07/091 **REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES**
- The Clerk gave a report from Mr Goodge: Confirmed new car parking arrangements discussed at last meeting commence 10 December with new Angel Drove car park opening 15 December. The Park and Ride scheme will commence, £2.50 per car, hopefully with some shops redeeming fee. He has one of the slots to speak about Mereham.
- 07/092 **ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES**
- Burial Board:** All Councillors
Village Hall Committee: Mr D A Bamforth and Mrs J Anderson
Cambridgeshire Association of Local Councils: Mr A Berry and D A Bamforth
East Cambridgeshire Parish Forum: Mr K Mackender and Mr D A Bamforth
Ely Sector Police Local Liaison Group: Mr C Watson
Strawburner Parish Forum: Mr David Saberton
Mepal Outdoor Centre: Mr David Saberton
Citizen's Advice Bureau Trustee Board: Mr D A Bamforth
Play Area: Mr David Saberton responsible for weekly inspections of equipment
HCV Joint Committee: Mr A Berry and Mr K Mackender
- Proposed Chairman, seconded Mr K Mackender, and agreed unanimously:
- 07/093 **RECREATION GROUND AND VILLAGE HALL FACILITIES**
- a) Progress on issues from RoSPA Report – Gaps under gates to be completed. DJS
- b) Review of Groundsman post and equipment – Mr Saberton reported the hover mower for banks could not be repaired and presented details for replacement. The Groundsman had other commitments and had not been able to carry out grasscutting regularly as required. Mr Saberton to discuss issues with Groundsman. Council to review options for next season. Invoice awaited for hedgecutting at cemetery earlier in year. DJS
- c) Monthly inspections of play equipment: Mr Saberton reported he was replacing the sandbags.
- d) Land rear 2 Martins Lane and Village Hall Drive. Clerk to meet with Chairman to prepare letter for solicitor to progress. All equipment and areas satisfactory. Chairman
Clerk

07/094 **PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

Clerk presented letter from County Council dated 24 September reiterating its position regarding the clearing of Bury Road. The Public Rights of Way Officers state the County Council has a statutory duty to 'Assert and Protect' the public highway for, in the case of Byways, walkers, riders, horse drawn and motorised vehicles. The County Council has checked the Definitive Map and Statement with regards to researched widths. They state it is not a County Wildlife Site and has no other designations but managing it properly will improve biodiversity and bring it to a condition where it may be able to be considered for recording in the future which is part of the aim. The primary function of this highway is to allow the public to pass and repass safely. Secondary to this, the works carried out are intended to restore the original character of the route, which was species rich grassland. The removal of scrub had opened the route allowing the light and air to penetrate. A cutting regime is to be established to allow wildflowers to thrive and keep scrub from re-establishing. Noted response from Ombudsman awaited.

Clerk to acknowledge letter reiterating the Parish Council's continued interest in the proposed management plans and seek protection for biodiversity of the droves as well being a byway open to users. *Clerk*

Clerk reported she had been contacted by a landowner in Pymore – Pygore Drove – where there was a similar plan to clear and open up the drove, allegedly without consultation with landowners and the issue had been aired on the local radio.

Clerk to contact Public Rights of Way Officer as the public footpath between High Street and Back Lane had not been cut as promised week commencing 17 September 2007. *Clerk*

07/095 **CEMETERY**

Quotation from Classic Blasting Services, Coveney, to sandblast, undercoat and black satin finish the cemetery gates £250. The Council could find no other organisation willing to take on the job so this was the only quotation. Chairman proposed acceptance of the quotation, seconded Mr C Watson and agreed unanimously. *DJS*

Mr Watson very kindly offered to take on the painting of the woodwork of the lychgate on a voluntary basis subject to the Council purchasing the paint and materials. This was accepted. *CW*

07/096 **COMMUNITY POLICE**

Clerk reported she had met PCSO Julie Collins on 14 September. 'How can we make your neighbourhood safer?' leaflet drop arranged with last Council newsletter giving residents the opportunity to list their top concerns in the neighbourhood and return card to Julie. The Cambridgeshire Constabulary had also established e-cops, an email scheme so that the local Neighbourhood Policing Team can keep people informed of what is happening in the area.

07/097 **REPORTS OF MEETINGS**

EPR Community Liaison Committee Meeting 25 September. Unfortunately representative could not attend but Clerk will obtain notes.

Training Seminar- Archiving Records/FOI. Clerk gave report and presented handout which will be used as basis for reviewing the Council's policies and procedures for dealing with archiving records. Electronic copy of template to be obtained from CPALC and forwarded to Chairman. *Clerk/Chairman*

Mr D Saberton reported on meeting of Mepal Outdoor Centre.

07/098 **STREET LIGHTING AND HIGHWAYS**

2 faulty lights in Martins Lane to be reported to County Council.

Headleys Lane – 2 quotations for replacement street lamp and column received. Mr K Mackender proposed acceptance of the quotation from Cambridgeshire County Council who maintain parish lights and who have supported the Parish Council in replacing and purchasing new street lights in the past. Quote: £1130.21 plus VAT. 1 x 5m lighting column Complete with Urbis ZXU1 lantern fitted with a 35W CDM-T lamp and removal of existing concrete lighting column and associated EDF cabling works. Seconded Mr C Watson. *Clerk*

07/099 **CORRESPONDENCE**

The following were received:

CALC Councillor Training Evening 20 November 2007. Clerk urged all Councillors to attend this as it is a very cost-effective opportunity (£15) for Councillors to familiarise themselves with Parish Council procedures and best practice, especially as we now have Quality Parish Council Status. Training to cover meeting procedures, Code of Conduct, Finance, Planning, role of Clerk, role of Councillor etc. *All*

Mereham Development Public Inquiry (see matters arising). Members confirmed objection to development due to issues relating to traffic congestion during building and when residents move in, lack of jobs and local infrastructure to support such a huge influx. *Chairman*

EDF Sub-Station Lease. Proposed increase to £25 on 21 year lease. Clerk to negotiate for improved terms. *Clerk*

LIDL Supermarket, Angel Drove. Request for meeting with representative from Council to gauge local opinion. Chairman proposed suggest to LIDL they organise and hold meeting at Witcham open to public. *Clerk*

ECDC Play Activities – noted new Co-ordinator appointed and review underway across district.

07/100 **PUBLICATIONS CIRCULATED**

Standards Board: 09 Bulletin and September newsletter

NALC Local Government Review

ACRE newsletter

ECDC Agendas and Decision Lists

07/101 **FINANCE**

a) Quarterly finance – Receipts and payments, reconciliation sheet, budget/actual and expected expenditure sheets presented. Receipts to 30 September 2007, including first Precept instalment, was £6833.35, expenditure £7607.70, giving a balance of £25661.99, and confirmed by bank reconciliation.

First draft for expected routine expenditure and expected receipts for calculation of 2008/9 Precept circulated to Councillors for consideration and discussion at next meeting when the draft Precept will be set for submission to ECDC by 30 November 2007. Councillors to review Parish Plan for next meeting with a view to prioritising and planning projects for future budgets *All*

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

			£	£	£
Receipts	Precept (2 nd instalment)		4500.00		4500.00
Payments	000865	Allianz Insurance (add'l premium)	25.98		25.98
	000866	Mepal Stores Ltd What's On S142 & Summer Council newsletter	13.50	2.36	31.72
	000867	J Lucas	6.00		6.00
	d/d	Talk Talk	4.12	.72	4.84

07/102 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 13 November 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 Parish Council meeting must be delivered to the Clerk for inclusion on the agenda at least 6 clear days prior to the meeting.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.45pm

Signed Dated