

WITCHFORD PARISH COUNCIL
ALL PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

7193

Witchford Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs A Hodges, 88 West Fen Road, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB6 3AA
Telephone 01353 664427

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 5th December 2018 at 7.30pm at St Andrews Hall Main Street

Present: Mr A Shaw (in the Chair), Mr I Allen, Mr I Boylett, Mr R Braund, Mr J Foulger, Mr D Jackson, Mr N Johnson Mrs R Lacey, Mr H Palmer and Mrs R Westwell
In attendance: District Cllr Cheetham

Public Session: Several members of the public were present. Concerns were expressed about planning application 18/01391/FUM, particularly that the proposed development is out of keeping with the landscape, concerns about light pollution, the impact on wildlife and concerns that if plots are sold off individually it will be difficult to manage the site. Concerns were also expressed about planning application 18/01611/OUM, particularly the impact of increased traffic, visual amenity, concerns about access for waste disposal vehicles. The Chairman advised that there are currently two live planning applications and one live planning appeal on this site. Cllr Cheetham advised that members of the public who wish to object to the planning application should do so in writing to the District Council Planning Officer.

18/293 Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Mrs L Dupre, District Councillors Mr M Hugo and Mr S Smith.

18/294 Cllr Westwell declared a personal interest in items 18/301 and 18/306.
Cllr Palmer declared a personal interest in item 18/298 18/01510/FUL.

18/295 The Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 21st November 2018 were approved by the Parish Council and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

18/296 Information from District and County Councillors

i) Reports from District and County Councillors

County Councillor Dupre sent a written report on recent County Council matters, The full text of Cllr Dupre's report is at www.tinyurl.com/lornasreports. Cllr Dupre will be holding Meet Your Councillor sessions at St Andrews Hall Witchford on Monday 28th January 2019 at 6.30pm – 7.30pm.

District Councillor Cheetham gave a report on recent District Council matters. The District Council expects to consult on a schedule of modifications to the Emerging Local Plan in the New Year with a current estimate of Local Plan adoption of April 2019. On 08 November 2018 a referendum on whether the Fordham Neighbourhood Plan should be used in deciding planning applications in Fordham parish was held. The plan was supported by the majority of voters, with 87% of votes in favour of the plan. Following the referendum result, the Neighbourhood Planning Act (2017) automatically gives the Fordham Neighbourhood Plan the same legal status as a plan which has been made (or adopted) by the District Council. Accordingly, since the referendum result, the Council has treated the Fordham Neighbourhood Plan as part of the Development Plan for the purposes of decision-making. In December the Fordham Neighbourhood Plan will be 'made' by Full Council, meaning the plan will be formally adopted into East Cambridgeshire's Development Plan. The Fordham Neighbourhood Plan will be East Cambridgeshire's first 'made' Neighbourhood Plan. The District Council has already refused a recent planning application on land outside the Fordham development envelope on the basis of this Neighbourhood Plan. A performance report for the delivery of the waste and street cleansing services by East Cambs Street Scene

(ECSS) after the insourcing of the services on 1 April 2018 Quarter 2 (July to September 2018) can be found at: <http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/agendas/12%20-%20051118%20T131%20ApF.pdf>

ii) The Parish Council noted the update from Cllr Cheetham about the progress of the public examination into the Emerging Local Plan. Following a two month hiatus, the Planning Inspector has now restarted work on the Local Plan. The District Council has a target date of April 2019 for adopting the Local Plan. When the new Local Plan is adopted then the village development envelopes will be reinstated. However, the Parish Council noted that establishing a 5-year housing supply is not only about allocating sufficient land but relies on developers actually building houses where planning permission has been granted. The build-rate in East Cambridgeshire is one of the lowest in the country.

Audit, Legal, Communications

18/297 The Parish Council agreed the terms of the 2019 – 22 Grasscutting Tender.

Planning Items

18/298 18/01510/FUL

Proposed equine livery yard comprising 15no loose boxes, store, hay & bedding store, muck bunker, parking, access and menage together with change of use of arable land to paddocks
Site west of Oak Farm West Fen Road

The Parish Council does not object to this application, but request a condition restricting future development on the site so that it remains for equestrian/agricultural use only. The Parish Council also questions the numbers of horse boxes on the site on the basis of the British Horse Society's recommended densities.

18/01611/OUM

Proposed Residential Development involving the erection of 33 dwellings, proposed access arrangements and associated works
Site South Of 85 To 97 Main Street

The Parish Council objects to this application on the following grounds: the planning history of this site as set out in the Planning Statement is not complete, the Parish Council has significant concerns about the status of the 'public body' that it is proposed should take over ownership of the horsefield and the need for legally binding protection for this land to ensure it remains public open space in perpetuity, the land should be made over to the Parish Council as the public body most suited to the role of protecting and enhancing this site, the Parish Council queries why the education provision that was a key part of the previous (still live) application for housing at this site has now been set aside, the whole of the development site is outside of the village development envelope, the proposed development is entirely unsympathetic to the location and landscape setting, does not comply with the Witchford Landscape Character Assessment and ignores the impact of the development on views back towards the village from the south, the road leading off Main Street into the housing development will destroy the visual amenity over this site from Main Street with lighting and street furniture, there will be significant negative impact on wildlife and biodiversity and the Parish Council will liaise with the Open Spaces Group over the ecological aspects of the application, proposals for surface drainage are insufficient and do not fully utilise SUDS, there are concerns over the future maintenance of retention basins which has to be undertaken annually, there are no details of how foul sewage will be dealt with, there will be significant traffic impact on Main Street, footpath No1 alongside the housing development will be urbanised and the proposals will destroy its value as a country walk, it is believed that bats

and barn owls are present in the three barns that will be demolished, this site is part of the wider landscape and assessment of the landscape impact of the development should not consider the site in isolation, it is not appropriate to build houses so close to a school playing field. The Parish Council will request that this application is determined by the planning officer in relation to the emerging Local Plan policies. If the application is taken to the District Council Planning Committee the Parish Council will be represented.

18/01391/FUM

Change of use of land to 10no Gypsy/Traveller pitches comprising 10no mobile homes, 10no touring caravans, hardstanding and foul drainage
Land at E550177 N277983 Pools Road

The Parish Council objects to this application on the following grounds: if the plots are to be sold off individually then how will ongoing site maintenance be managed and enforced, there is a significant risk of flooding from the adjacent Grunty Fen Catchwater Drain and the Parish Council is concerned that the application does not comply with policy LP25 in the emerging East Cambridgeshire Local Plan, the site is not accessible by public transport and is not within reasonable walking or cycling distance to health care facilities and schools, there will be negative impacts from light and noise pollution in an open countryside setting, the Parish Council is concerned about the safety of the proposed vehicular egress from the site onto Pools Road, the proposal is out of keeping with the open countryside location, the site does not therefore comply with policy LP7 in the emerging East Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

18/01630/FUL

Change of use of a Roadside verge that has been maintained by ourselves and previous occupants for over 20 years to garden for the property to the North
Land To The South Of Needhams Farm 186 Main Street

The Parish Council objects to this application on the following grounds: the land belongs to Cambridgeshire County Council Highways as highway verge, it is currently open for public use and adverse possession can only be claimed if there has been exclusive use of the relevant area of land, there are three mature trees on the land, the Parish Council pays a contractor to mow the highways verges.

18/299 **Finance**

The Parish Council noted the bank reconciliation as at 26th October 2018 and agreed the cheques on the schedule of cheques.

18/300 Budget 2019-20:

i) the Parish Council noted information from Cambridgeshire County Council about the cost of real time bus stops. One solar powered display costs £5223.87 including installation and post with socket. The Parish Council agreed to proceed with its request to the County Council for two real time bus stops (at St Andrews Hall and the Post Office) and to review what effect these have had for residents after one year, before deciding whether to fund additional real time bus stops. In the meantime the Parish Council will ask if additional bus stops could be provided in Witchford by the County Council if there are any funds left in their budget at the end of the financial year.

ii) the Parish Council agreed the following additional capital project items for the 2019-20 budget: business accounting software approximately £500. The Parish Council also agreed to add interactive speed signs to the Transport Plan and investigate costs and options with a view to considering funding these in the 2020-21 budget.

18/301 The Parish Council reviewed expenditure on Church floodlighting since 2012 and will investigate options and costings for replacing the existing light fittings with LED bulbs/fittings.

- 18/302 Both of the Parish Council play areas, at Common Road and Bedwell Hey Lane, have been inspected weekly during November 2018. No matters of concern have been noted.
- 18/303 Cllr Braund and Cllr Lacey gave a report on the Local Highways Improvement Fund Panel meeting they attended on behalf of the Parish Council on 28th October, to present the Council's bid for funds for an additional raised table by the Millennium Wood. It was felt that the meeting was positive. A decision from the Panel on whether they will fund the Parish Council's scheme is expected in January.
- 18/304 Welcome pack:
- i) The Parish Council reviewed draft text and indicative layout for the welcome pack. A short introductory paragraph will be added. The intention is to provide information for new residents to help them integrate into the village.
 - ii) The Parish Council agreed to seek quotations for design work and for printing 500 copies.
- 18/305 The Parish Council noted that the District Council is looking to install signs to publicise the new Dog Fouling Public Space Protection Order and has requested suggestions from the Parish Council as to suitable locations. The Cllr Palmer as Open Spaces Councillor and Cllr Braund will submit suggested locations to the Clerk.
- 18/306 Works at the Common:
- i) The Parish Council discussed plans for works to tidy up the boundary between the accommodation track behind Manor Close and the Common. The Parish Council agreed that the site should be cleared and levelled. The Parish Council then voted that the cleared areas should be planted with native shrubs rather than grassed over. The Parish Council will consider a revised budget for these works at a future meeting.
 - ii) The Parish Council noted that works have been carried out to make safe a willow tree at the Common on the advice of the District Council and Parish Tree Warden in accordance with the Parish Council Tree Protocol.
- 18/306 The Parish Council noted an email from ECDC advising that the District Council will not be setting aside business rates from the Ely Leisure Park for litter picking as this is not felt to be necessary. As this will be monitored the Parish Council agreed to refer this back to the District Council in the new year for an update.
- 18/307 The Parish Council confirmed that suitably managed fires in Millennium Wood are now permitted again.
- 18/308 Team D and the Open Spaces Group have carried out voluntary conservation and maintenance work as detailed to the Parish Council this month.
- 18/309 Councillor Reports

The Speedwatch session on 14th November 2018 on Main Street outside the vets (eastbound) between 08.02 and 08.47 recorded 171 vehicles with 5 travelling at between 35-39 mph and 0 travelling at over 40mph. The Speedwatch session on 24th November 2018 on Main Street eastbound towards Ely between 09.40 and 10.40 recorded 265 vehicles with 22 travelling at between 35-39 mph and 1 travelling at over 40mph. The Speedwatch session on 1st December 2018 on Main Street eastbound towards Ely between 09.40 and 10.40 recorded 154 vehicles with 6 travelling at between 35-39 mph and 0 travelling at over 40mph. The Speedwatch session on 4th December 2018 on Main Street eastbound towards Ely between 08.00 and 08.30 recorded 290 vehicles with 5 travelling at between 35-39 mph and 1 travelling at over 40mph.

Councillors expressed concerns that there parking arrangements for the public visiting the District Council offices in Ely are insufficient.

The old climbing net has now been dismantled.

Further to Minute 18/263 (ii) the Parish Council will ask the WPFA for their proposals for tree works at the village hall.

18/310 In addition to items raised during the course of the meeting, Councillors proposed the following items for inclusion in upcoming Parish Council agendas: welcome pack quotations, litter picking project, the Millennium Wood entrance, options for s106 funds from the Manor Raod development, gas cylinder collection.

18/311 The Parish Council noted the activity log for November 2018.

18/312 Date of next Parish Council meeting Wednesday 19th December 2018.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.20 p.m.

Signed: Chairman

Date:

DRAFT