

COMBERTON PARISH COUNCIL
The minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 12 September 2007
in the Village Hall at 7.30pm

Members present:	Mr R Rowlands	Mrs D Morison
Councillors:	Dr R Rintoul	Mr J Walsh
	Dr C Chambers	Mrs S Hyde
	Mrs J Horne	Mr A Hollick
	Dr H Roscoe	Miss C Westgarth (Chairman)
	Dr J McCabe	

In attendance: Cllr S Harangozo, Mrs G Stoehr (Clerk) and 3 members of the public.

Comments & observations from members of the public

Questions were asked about the hole in Swaynes Lane and when it would be filled. It was noted that Cambridge Water needed to return to the site. Also when Cambridge County Council will stop digging up Barton Road, and what is wrong with the cycleway sections of it are unfit to ride on? It was thought that EDF Energy that are working on the road and agreed that a letter of complaint will be sent to CCC about the lack of notification.

There was also a complaint from a member of the public that they couldn't hear. The hearing loop was not accessible at the meeting.

1. To approve apologies for absence and declarations of interest

1.0 Apologies were received from Cllr Ellis and Cllr Charge (out of parish).

1.1 There were no declarations of interest at this point.

2. To approve the minutes of the meeting on 11 July 2007

2.0 On a proposition by Dr Chambers, seconded by Dr Rintoul the minutes of 11 July 2007 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters arising or carried forward from the meeting or a previous meeting for discussion or decision including

3.1 (7.1) To consider further Mr Peddar's request to buy a strip of POS adjacent to his home, following a visit to the site by members of the Council

The request was again considered, however it was agreed following a proposition by Miss Westgarth and seconded by Mrs Morison that the Parish Council reject the application to sell the strip of land. The vote was recorded as 9 in favour and 2 abstentions.

3.2 (3.2) Clarification on CCC's Network Plan¹

The email that had been received was noted.

3.3 (5.1) Pavilion accounts

The Clerk apologised that she had inaccurately report on the pavilion accounts at the last meeting and her letter of apology to the Cricket Club was noted. It was agreed that no further action was required.

4. County Councillor and District Councillor reports and questions

Cllr Harangozo reported on:

- 'How much do SCDC community grants matter?'²
- Cambridgeshire County Council has outlined their proposals for Congestion Charges.

- Having met with Dennis Vacher the Highways Supervisor, Cllr Harangozo has been given an undertaking that over the next three years CCC will resurface all pavements in the village, and raise a budget to reseal the drains.
- 82-83 Swaynes Lane – the resurfacing has damaged part of the road. Cllr Harangozo had got Dennis Vacher to agree to CCC building up the verge edge and erecting bollards.

The Parish Council expressed concerns that these measures might not improve drainage and may impinge on the rural nature of Swaynes Lane. It was agreed that at this stage, only the verge should be reinstated and the bollards should be put on hold until this is reviewed fully. A suggestion of a log edge is to be considered further. It was agreed that Mr Hollick should be the Council's representative for this matter and that he will discuss this further with Dennis Vacher and report to a future meeting.

5. Finance, Procedure and Risk Assessment

5.1 To receive the financial report and to approve the payment of bills³

The financial report was received and considered and checked by a member against the invoices and statements before the cheques were signed. On a proposition by Dr Chambers, seconded by Mr Rowlands it was agreed that the payments as listed in the financial report should be paid plus: Mills & Reeves £1038.36, Mills & Reeves £1,205.70, MD Landscapes £887.13 and LGS Services £756.50.

SCDC (Rates)	£124.00
BT (Telephone Bill)	£57.00
Roger Abraham (Handyman)	£70.00
Moore Stephens (Audit)	£646.25
Pro-Cam Agriculture	£22.91
Powergen (Electricity)	£28.19
Powergen (Electricity)	£111.05
MD Landscapes (Grasscutting)	£752.00
LGS Services (Admin Support)	£733.13
Andrew Marsh (Handyman)	£120.00
Cambs ACRE (Howard Roscoe Conference)	£15.00
Dents (Pavilion Key Cuts)	£72.85
Roger Abraham (Handyman)	£24.50
BT (Telephone Bill)	£36.23
Public Works Loan Board (Loan Repayment)	£8432.72
LG Stoehr (Salary)	£273.64

It was noted that additional checks have been set up for the pavilion accounts. In the past this has been done on the income & expenditure spreadsheets. This will detail all reimbursable i.e. payments for water & electricity & keys etc which are charged to the Sports Clubs v hire invoices and receipts

5.2 Audit Conclusion

In addition to the standard checks Moore Stephens had enquired into the land purchase in particular expenditure, process, the Council's powers, procedure and evidence. This had been provided and the audit was concluded finding everything in order. The required notice had been put on the notice board.

6. To receive reports and members items and consider recommendations contained therein

6.1 Planning report including handling of tree applications

The Planning report was noted.⁴

It was agreed to carry forward discussion of the tree work applications.

6.2 Affordable Housing – The Planning Group and Working Party to bring to the meeting recommendation of a suitable site

The report was noted.⁵ Following a proposition by Miss Westgarth and seconded by Mrs Morison it was agreed to accept the Working Group's recommendation that the remit of the Group be extended to discuss with other parishes, and potential providers of affordable homes, in order to facilitate/encourage provision of affordable homes within Comberton (consistent with Comberton's need).

Cllr Harangozo reported that the Cambridge Housing Society is looking into land outside the village, in Toft, opposite the college. The Parish Council expressed concern that discussions were going in about an area that will have a big impact on the village.

Cllr Harangozo was asked to clarify the Parish Council's involvement and say over things that matter to the village but are in an adjacent parish. It was agreed that the Parish Council wanted a written report on the proposals for the West St site and then depending on the report's contents either a briefing to full council and/or a public meeting. The vote was recorded as 10 in favour with 1 abstention.

6.3 Recreation Ground Trust

Mr Rowlands and Dr Chambers reported that the Group has met to discuss the way forward and that a meeting with the sports clubs has been arranged for next week. Mr Wall will not now be involved as his fee was considered too high. A report will be brought to the next meeting.

6.4 Police Neighbourhood Panel Meeting

Dr Rintoul's report was considered,⁶ along with the Neighbourhood Panel Meeting Minutes⁷

Dr Chambers left the meeting.

It was noted that Mrs Julie Caine has retired as Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator and Mrs Valerie Jacklin has taken over. Thanks were expressed to Mrs Caine for her contribution to the village.

6.5 Focus Group – recommendation for a committee to attend to various maintenance aspects of the village

Dr Wright's offer was considered and the Focus Group was asked to explore further and bring a recommendation to a future meeting.

6.6 Tree Group – Pond wall

In response to a grant application to SCDC the Ecology Officer, Rob Mungovan had said he could not provide a grant for the wall unless an alternative material of hazel faggot bundles was used. Quotations for this are to be obtained and the contractors that quoted for the pond wall are to be asked if their quotations submitted last year still stand. Mr Mungovan is to be asked to provide a sketch showing what the faggot bundles would look like and Mrs Morison was asked to get the Tree Group's recommendation and this item is to be carried forward to the next meeting.

7. To consider matters arising out of correspondence/communications received including

7.1 Complaint from residents about grass cutting/contractor

Considering both the complaints⁸ and also the Contractor's response⁹ the Parish Council concluded that the matter of the broken windscreen was between the two parties and that the contractor had offered to pay for a repair however as to the allegation of verbal abuse to a parishioner this is unacceptable and the Council will not condone that sort of behaviour. The contractor and the complainant is to be informed.

7.2 SCDC Scrutiny and Overview Committee Meeting at Comberton 11 October 5.30pm – suggestions for agenda¹⁰

It was agreed that the following would be suggested:

- What is the Parish Council's role in exception site applications?

For example:

Who makes the final decision?

How much of a say can the Parish Council have? Would the District Council support development of an exception site which was strongly opposed by the Parish Council and its parishioners?

- If the District Council has the power to undertake additional activity beyond what is required in the Licensing Act and regulations, for example to consult or inform parish councils about license applications, why does it not do so?
- What is the role of parish councils in the planning process and why does it now appear to be restricted to only the completion of the blue form?

In the past if the planning officer and the Parish Council had opposing views about a planning application it was referred automatically to the Planning Committee for elected members to decide. Now many applications go instead to the Chairman's delegated meeting and parish councils are not invited to attend and therefore lose their opportunity to speak to the committee and explain their concerns etc. While the Parish Council appreciates the time restraints of determining applications within a certain time scale the parish council would like to ask the Scrutiny and Overview Committee to re-establish the process whereby the PC is more involved than just completing a blue consultation form.

- Is lack of staff resources sufficient reason for SCDC to now change its approach to village design statements?

Including:

Why is it now necessary for parish councils to now take the lead in preparing the sustainability appraisal and undertaking the necessary public consultation and when and how was this decided?

What is the difference between a village design statements and Supplementary Planning Document and a village design statement adopted as Council Policy?

7.3 Cambridgeshire County Council's Parking Policy Review consultation¹¹

The Parish Council feels that this is not relevant to Comberton.

7.4 Draft Licensing Policy consultation¹²

It was agreed to reiterate previous comments regarding the importance of the Parish Council as representative of the village and its request to be notified of all applications.

7.5 Cambridgeshire Design Guide consultation¹³

Dr Roscoe reported that the link for the Design Guide doesn't work. CCC is to be asked to provide the information so that Dr Roscoe can recommend if a response to this consultation is necessary.

7.6 Comberton Village Institute Trust – buildings insurance for Village Hall¹⁴

This was noted.

7.7 Mental Health Trust Foundation status consultation¹⁵

Noted.

7.8 SCDC Homelessness Review – Rough Sleepers count¹⁶

The request from SCDC for information was considered. The Parish Council was not aware of rough sleepers presently in the village.

8. Closure of meeting

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 10.10 pm.

SignedChairmandate

These documents below do not form part of the minutes and are listed here only as background to the items discussed and for ease of reference

- ¹ CCC's Network Plan
- ² Cllr Steve Harangozo's report on 'How much do SCDC community grants matter?'
- ³ Financial Report
- ⁴ Planning Group Report
- ⁵ Affordable Housing – The Planning Group and Working Party report
- ⁶ Dr Rintoul's report on the Police Neighbourhood Panel Meeting
- ⁷ Neighbourhood Panel Meeting Minutes
- ⁸ Resident's complaint about contractor
- ⁹ Grass cutting contractor's response to the complaints
- ¹⁰ Email from Patrick Adams re SCDC Scrutiny and Overview Committee Meeting at Comberton 11 October 5.30pm – suggestions for agenda
- ¹¹ Cambridgeshire County Council's Parking Policy Review consultation
- ¹² Draft Licensing Policy consultation
- ¹³ Cambridgeshire Design Guide consultation
- ¹⁴ Comberton Village Institute Trust – buildings insurance for Village Hall
- ¹⁵ Mental Health Trust Foundation status consultation
- ¹⁶ SCDC Homelessness Review – Rough Sleepers count