

COMBERTON PARISH COUNCIL
The minutes of the Meeting held on 13 February 2008
in the Village Hall at 7.30pm

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

In attendance: Mrs G Stoehr (Clerk) and 8 members of the public.

Comments & observations from members of the public

Several members of the Parish Council exercised their rights to make representations as members of the public. Residents commented on last week's meeting and the impression that the village would be lumbered with the proposed affordable housing. It was highlighted that the Planning Officer and the Highways Officer saw no reason to turn down the application for the proposed housing off The Valley. It was felt that the location and access is hopeless. The Housing Officer stated that 57 people with connections to Comberton are in need of housing. It was reported that Robert Arnold is hoping to develop land opposite the college and it is hoped this will meet the need of Comberton. It is hoped that the Parish Council will look for other suitable sites and contact the local landowners to ask if they will make the sites available for development. There should be no more development until the infrastructure including the surgery and drainage can cope. Photographic evidence of sewerage taken on a mobile phone is to be sent to Anglian Water.

Questions were asked about the definition 'small' and that residents did not agree with the planning officer's interpretation. Concern was expressed at whether Comberton could accommodate 57 new dwellings even if split over several sites. Concern was also expressed that no account has been taken of the recent developments e.g. Milner Road and Leach Homes and Green End opposite the Garage. Residents were still uncertain how the need had been identified and the figure of 57 arrived at. Concern also was expressed that there was no guarantee that the housing would be allocated to those with strong connections to Comberton. The need to accept the District Council figures as correct was highlighted by one resident. It was agreed that there needs to be a discussion on phased development

It was brought to the attention of the Parish Council that the phone box in Harbour Avenue has been smashed up and the coin box has been taken. This has been reported.

1. To approve apologies for absence and declarations of interest

1.0.1 Apologies were received from Dr C Chambers, Mr Ellis and Mrs Horne (out of parish) and Cllr Steve Harangozo.

1.0.2 Dr McCabe both declared a prejudicial interest in 6.1 as an adjacent neighbour. Mr Walsh likewise declared an interest in item 6.1 as he too is a neighbour to one applicant.

Mr Charge and Mrs Morison declared an ongoing prejudicial interest in item 3.1 as residents of St Thomas Close and The Valley.

2. To approve the minutes of the previous meeting 19 January 2008

On a proposition by Dr Roscoe, seconded by Mrs Morison the minutes of 19 January 2008 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman after the following minor amendments:

- R Rowlands was present and therefore his apologies for absence should be deleted.

- Item: 5.2.1
 - ‘Recreation ground phase 2 extension’ should read ‘£5000 Recreation ground phase 2 extension’.
 - ‘youth provision’ should be deleted.

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

3.1 **(3.1) Northern Affordable Homes - Parish Meeting & report from Working Group on meeting with Martin Williams SCDC & parishioner correspondence**

Report of working group¹ meeting on Affordable Housing Group with Martin Williams SCDC dated 31 January 2008 were considered.

On a proposition by Dr McCabe, seconded by Dr Roscoe it was unanimously agreed to support the Working Group’s recommendation that the Parish Council support development of a total of 15 – 20 affordable homes in Comberton possibly on more than one site but that these be built in phases to allow ongoing evaluation of the uptake and subsequent need.

On a proposition by Miss Westgarth, seconded by Dr Roscoe it was unanimously agreed that the Working Group should meet with SCDC to discuss phased development, potential alternative sites and approach landowners, housing associations etc. Mrs. Hyde will join the Working Group and up to two non-Council members may be co-opted. Who, how and if they are co-opted is at the Working Group’s discretion.

Action: Dr McCabe (convener), Mr. Walsh, Dr Chambers, Mr Ellis, Mrs Morison – next meeting

The following papers which were circulated to the Council were noted:

- Details - NAH Land at ‘The Valley’ - Consultation Wednesday 6 February 2008²
- NAH Public Consultation – Response Sheet³
- Comberton Housing Needs Register dated 23 April 2007⁴
- Letter from Miss Christine Alder letter to Nigel Blazeby SCDC dated 7 February 2008 on behalf of residents⁵

3.2 **(4) Objection site Inspector hearing**

The LDF procedure, the different stages and when the Parish Council could make representations was outlined. It was noted that this hearing was between only the objector, the District Council and the Inspector. If the Inspector considered the objection worthy of a public hearing it would be at that stage when the Parish Council next could make comments on the site. Given this it was noted that no complaint had been submitted to SCDC as it was not relevant.

3.3 **(5) Hearing loop**

It was noted that this was tested this evening by the Village Hall representatives, Parish Council, Chairman, Clerk and two residents and it was concluded by all parties that the loop is not working effectively all the time. On a proposition by Miss Westgarth, seconded by Mrs. Hyde it was agreed to ask the RNID to come and assess the problem and to recommend what needs to be done at a cost of £150.

3.4 **(5.3) P3 grant application**

On a proposition by Mrs Hyde, seconded by Mrs Morison it was agreed to apply for a grant to undertake the following work:

- F5 Restoration of path, new gate etc
- F8 Weed spraying, reseeding, moss etc removal & work to drainage at northern end of footpath
- BW7/10 levelling

It was also agreed that if the County Council's grant was insufficient to cover the costs of the proposed work the Parish Council would meet the shortfall as these were important projects and would cost more if left.

It was noted that R Rintoul left the meeting and did not return.

4. County Councillor and District Councillor reports & questions

A summary of Mr Lansley MP's reply to the Parish Council's letter was given. The Council did not agree with his response and a letter is to be sent informing him that Cllr Baldwin does not send a written report or respond to communications. It was agreed to send a letter to Cllr Baldwin stating that the Parish Council expect a submission for every meeting. An article is to be placed in Contact letting the residents know of the situation and letters are to be sent to Cllr Baldwin's other villages asking how many times he attends their meetings.

5. Finance, procedure & risk assessment⁶

5.1 To receive the financial report and approve the payment of bills

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 McCabe, seconded by Mrs Morison it was agreed that the payments as listed in the financial report should be paid plus:

Cambs Countryside Watch	£25.00
Alarm Maintenance Ltd (alarm test)	£64.63
Peter Oakes (tree work)	£164.50
Roger Abraham (handyman)	£63.00
CALC (member training)	£27.50
Information Commissioner (DPA renewal)	£35.00
LGS Services (admin support)	£897.05
L G Stoehr (salary)	£144.69
Ian Hildrew (electrical testing)	£362.00
Ridgeons	£214.84
EON (electricity)	£237.10
Cambridge Water Company (water bill)	£186.40
A Marsh (pavilion cleaning)	£150.00

It was noted that the District Council had requested £12 for a copy of the Hawtreys S106 Agreement even though this had been requested under the Freedom of Information Act. From discussion with the Information Commissioner's Office it was noted that the District Council may charge disbursements for providing the information in a certain format e.g. Braille or on a CD etc. it may also charge the cost of photocopy and the cost of communicating the information e.g. postage at standard rates. It may not make a profit out of supplying the information. The charge has to be reasonable.

Comberton Parish Council did not think that £12 for a 13 page document and a 3 page document which the District Council already hold electronically and can email is reasonable. It also did not think that £12 for a 16 pages of photocopy is reasonable. It The District Council's website states that all publications available electronically will be free of charge. It was agreed that Comberton Parish Council therefore asks that the District Council review this charge for the information and release these two documents to the Parish Council by email under the Freedom of Information Act as already requested.

5.2 Request for financial support from the Scouts⁷

The request from the Scouts for financial support dated 12 September 2007 was noted and considered. On a proposition by Miss Westgarth and seconded by Mrs Hyde that

in accordance with its powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Council donate £300 to the Scouts which, in the opinion of the Council is in the interests of the area and its inhabitants, was carried unanimously.

5.3 Tree Works Recreation Ground - Quote

The e-mail/quote dated 29 January 2008 from P Oakes⁸ for tree works to oak trees on the recreation ground was considered. On a proposition by Miss Westgarth, seconded by Mrs Hyde it was unanimously agreed to accept the quote from Peter Oakes of £450.

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

6.1 Planning Committee

Dr McCabe and Mr. Walsh having both declared prejudicial interest in this item left the meeting while this was discussed was discussed.

The Planning Committee's report⁹ was noted.

Dr McCabe and Mr. Walsh re-joined the meeting.

6.2 Tree Group

The Tree Group's recommendation for a tree works application was noted. It was noted that the Planning Committee would object to the application unless the applicant can substantiate with evidence the need for the removal.

Peter Oakes has been contracted to undertake the tree work in The Valley.

6.3 Recreation Ground Working Group

It was noted that there was a meeting on 21 January with Comberton Crusaders and Comberton United representatives. The fees were discussed and it was highlighted that clubs will report back to the next meeting on 25 February 2008 on the proposed fees and also the proposed management committee and or trust. It was agreed to arrange regular meetings and set up a long term plan. The Chairman gave her apologies for the next meeting and it was agreed that the Clerk is to attend in her place.

It was noted that when the meeting was held on 21 January the Pavilion was dirty, the alarm was not set and the inner door was not locked. An e-mail has already been sent to the cleaner about the cleaning arrangements.

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

7.1 Mr & Mrs Waters - Hines Lane – Recycling Facilities¹⁰

The e-mail from Mr & Mrs Waters dated 22 January 2008 regarding recycling facilities was noted and considered. It was agreed that the green dumpster is to go and that a reply should be sent stating that it is noted that SCDC intend to phase out these facilities in October in favour of doorstep recycling. It was noted that if residents log onto the SCDC website complaints could be sent directly to the Enforcement Officer. It was agreed that the Parish Council would also register the problem with the Enforcement Officer and ask him to look into the matter.

7.2 Mr Mister - Mud verges in Hillfield Road¹¹

The e-mail from Mr Mister dated 26 January regarding mud verges in Hillfield Road was considered. It was noted that the Chairman had also received a telephone call from another resident requesting that the verges are reinstated. Concern was expressed about some residents driving across public open spaces/verges and also about parking on the smaller areas of public open space. It was agreed to seek quotes for top soil and re-seeding and to consider these at the next meeting. It was agreed that Mr Charge would place an article in Contact concerning grassed areas and parking.

7.3 Audit Commission - Notification that Moore Stephens will be the Parish Councils auditor for the next 5 Years¹²

Noted.

8. Closure of meeting

8.0.1 It was noted that the next Police Neighbourhood meeting is on 20 February 2008.

8.0.2 It was highlighted that there is a P3 event on the 1 March 2008 at Shire Hall.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 9.50 pm.

SignedChairmandate

¹ Report of working group and minutes of NAH meeting with Martin Williams SCDC dated 31/1//08

² Details - NAH Land at 'The Valley' - Consultation Wednesday 6th February 2008.

³ NAH Public Consultation – Response Sheet

⁴ Comberton Housing Needs Register dated 23rd April 2007

⁵ Letter Miss Christine Alder to Nigel Blazeby SCDC dated 7/2/08 on behalf of residents re: NAH The Valley

⁶ Finance, procedure & risk assessment

⁷ Request for financial support from the Scouts dated 12/9/07

⁸ E-mail/Quote P Oakes tree works Recreation Ground

⁹ Planning Committee Report

¹⁰ E-mail dated 22/1/08 Mr & Mrs Waters - Hines Lane – Recycling Facilities

¹¹ E-mail dated 26/1/08 Mr Mister - Mud verges in Hillfield Road

¹² Audit Commission - Notification that Moore Stephens will be the Parish Councils auditor for the next 5 Years