

COMBERTON PARISH COUNCIL
The minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on
Wednesday 14 May 2008 in the Village Hall at 7.30pm

Members present:	Dr C Chambers	Dr J McCabe
Councillors:	Mr A Hollick	Mrs D Morison
	Mrs S Hyde	Dr H Roscoe
		Mr J Walsh

In attendance: Cllr Harangozo, 2 members of the public and Mrs L Hazel (Minutes Secretary, LGS Services).

In the Miss Westgarth's absence Dr, McCabe chaired the meeting.

Comments & observations from members of the public

Residents commented on the condition of the notice board in South Street, the hedge at the junction of Long Road and Harbour Avenue and also the progress with the hearing loop.

1. Annual and procedural Business

1.1 To elect a Chairman

The proposal by Mrs Morison, seconded by Mrs Hyde that Miss Chris Westgarth be elected Chairman was carried unanimously.

1.2 To receive the Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office or, if not then received, to decide when it shall be received

It was agreed in Miss Westgarth's absence that the declaration of office is to be received by the next meeting.

1.3 Co-option to fill casual vacancy

It was noted that there has been no response to the notice or article in Contact. All members are to approach potential new members and ask that they consider standing for co-option. This item is to be carried forward to the next meeting.

1.4 To elect a Vice-Chairman

The proposal by Mrs Morison, seconded by Dr Chambers, that Dr Janet McCabe be elected as Vice-Chair was carried unanimously.

1.5 To appoint committees or any other officers which the Council deems necessary

1.3.1 Planning Committee

Terms of Reference - Comberton Parish Council Planning Committee (The Planning Committee for short) is delegated:

- To consider and determine, on the Parish Council's behalf, all matters relating to residential planning and development control in the parish (up to 2 dwellings per plot and all associated planning applications e.g. walls, extensions etc).
- To consider and make recommendation on all matters in the adjacent parishes having impact on Comberton parish and to make recommendation to the Parish Council.
- To hold public meetings to gauge residents' views as appropriate
- To respond to communications relating to planning matters.
- To consider and respond to all matters relating to previous applications (e.g. amendments, enforcements, appeals etc).
- To discuss all matters relating to planning matters with officers at the local authorities.
- To attend and represent the Parish Council at SCDC Development Control Committee meetings.

- To consider all matters relating to the conservation area and to make recommendation to the Parish Council.
- To consider and draw up a draft village design statement and to make recommendation for its adoption to the Parish Council.
- To consider all matters relating to commercial applications and other non-residential development within the village and to make recommendation to the Parish Council.
- To consider all matters relating to development of 3 plus dwellings and to make recommendation for the approval or otherwise to the parish council and where appropriate make recommendation for the terms of any S106 agreement.
- To consider any recommendation by the Tree Group and/or Tree Warden on tree applications within the conservation area and to respond to the District Council.
- To consider all matters relating to any landscape or character assessment and to make recommendation.

The Planning Committee:

- Must have due regard to the Parish Council's Standing Orders at all times. In particular that meetings must be held in a public place, properly convened and decisions clearly minuted. It must act as a corporate body.
- Must respond to any direction given by the Parish Council.
- Membership shall be up to seven members with a quorum of three. These members shall be Miss Westgarth, Mr Charge, Dr Chambers, Mrs Morison and Dr J McCabe.
- Should elect from amongst its members every six months a Chairman who is authorised to sign all agenda, correspondence and planning responses during their term of office.
- May set up sub groups (working parties) that may meet informally to discuss aspects of the Planning Committee's work and to prepare recommendations for the Committee's consideration. The working parties may contain persons not on the Parish Council.
- May invite individuals, groups and organisations and/or officials to attend its meetings as appropriate and public participation at the meetings is at the Committee's discretion.
- May seek free advice or information from the District or County Councils and/or other body to enable it to understand or carry out its duties more effectively or to bring recommendation to the Parish Council if there is a cost implication to the Parish Council.

1.3.2 Focus Group

Focus Group Terms of Reference:

- Brief: A group to consider and respond to new ideas and initiatives and to make recommendations to full council for its consideration.
- Administrative matters: No formal agenda, minutes or meeting room required etc as group not committee
- Financial matters: Delegated to arrange and spend the Community Events budget annually in conjunction with the Clerk.
- Membership: Miss Westgarth and Mr Hollick (convenor) and Dr Wright (co-opted). All members are to be invited to attend meetings and participate.

The Focus Group

- Must have due regard for the Parish Council's Standing Orders.

- May seek advice or information from the District or County Councils and/or other body to enable it to understand or carry out its duties more effectively.
- Should liaise with other Parish Council committees as appropriate.
- May co-op residents and others to attend.

1.3.3 Tree Group

Terms of Reference:

- Brief: A group to consider and monitor all matters relating to trees and hedging in the public areas of the parish and on land owned or managed by the Parish Council.

The Tree Group is asked to:

- Monitor all trees owned by the Parish Council as detailed in the Tree Survey report dated January 2001 and to make recommendations to full Council for its consideration.
- To consider all matters relating to trees in private ownership where they impact on the public areas and to make recommendation to the appropriate authority.
- Consider all tree applications for work within a conservation area and to make recommendation to the Planning Committee for a response.
- Consider all implications relating to trees and hedging as part of planning applications and S106 Agreements.
- Administrative matters: No formal agenda, minutes or meeting room required etc as a working party not a committee
- Financial matters: The members together with the Clerk are delegated to spend the budget allocated each year for tree maintenance and tree projects having due regard for the Council's standing and financial orders.
- Membership: Mrs Morison, Mrs Winney, Mr Robert Cook (Tree Warden) Mrs Hyde and Mrs Horne.

1.3.4 Recreation Ground Group

It was agreed to carry this item forward to the next meeting.

1.3.5 Recreation Ground Trust Group

It was agreed to carry this item forward to the next meeting.

It was agreed that the representation of this group should be broadened to include other users of the recreation ground and not just the sports club. Mr Hollick will approach other users and report back to the next meeting.

1.3.6 Transport Working Group (TWG)

Terms of reference:

- To continue to review the transport section of the Comberton Parish Plan and to make recommendation for implementation of projects to the Parish Council indicating clearly any anticipated costs.
- Administrative matters: No formal agenda, minutes or meeting room required etc as a working party not a committee
- Membership: Mrs Hyde, Dr Roscoe (convenor), Mr Charge, Dr Rintoul and Cllr S Harangozo (co-opted).

The TWG Group:

- Must have due regard for the Parish Council's Standing Orders.
- May seek advice or information from the District or County Councils and/or other body to enable it to understand or carry out its duties more effectively.
- Should liaise with other Parish Council committees as appropriate.
- May co-opt parishioners and others to join the group.

1.3.7 Flooding Issues, Watercourses and Ditches Group

Terms of reference

- To continue to review the condition of all watercourses, ditches, drains etc in the parish and to make recommendation, where appropriate, to the Parish Council.
- Administrative matters: No formal agenda, minutes or meeting room required etc as a working party not a committee
- Membership: Mr Walsh, Mr Hollick and Mrs Hyde.

The Group:

- Must have due regard for the Parish Council's Standing Orders.
- May seek advice or information from the District or County Councils, Environment Agency, Anglian Water and/or other body to enable it to understand or carry out its duties more effectively.
- May co-opt parishioners and others to join the group.

1.3.8 Youth Provision

This is to be carried forward to the next meeting for further consideration.

1.3.9 Affordable Housing

Terms of Reference

- To facilitate/encourage provision of affordable homes within Comberton (consistent with Comberton's need) and to make recommendation, where appropriate, to the Parish Council.
- Administrative matters: No formal agenda, minutes or meeting room required etc as a working party not a committee
- Membership: Dr McCabe, Dr Chambers, Mr Walsh, Mrs Morison

The Group:

- Must have due regard for the Parish Council's Standing Orders.
- May seek advice or information from the District or County Councils, Water and/or other body to enable it to understand or carry out its duties more effectively.
- May liaise and discuss Comberton's affordable housing need and provision 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).
- May co-opt to two parishioners and others to join the group.
- Should liaise with other Parish Council committees and working groups as appropriate.

1.6 To appoint representatives on any other organisation or authority, which the Council deems necessary

Terms of Reference:

The members as appointed to represent the Council on another organisation or authority are asked to research and attend meetings relating to their area of representation and to report regularly to the Parish Council. Members are also asked to make clear recommendation for action to the Parish Council as and when appropriate. Members should have due regard for the Parish Council's Standing Orders at all times.

1.6.1 **CALC:** All members are to attend CALC meetings or training whenever possible. As the position of Parish Council representative is vacant it was agreed to carry this item forward to the next meeting.

1.6.2 **Village Hall Representatives:** Mr Hollick and Mrs Hyde.

1.6.3 **Police Liaison:** It was agreed that this would be carried forward to the next meeting to allow terms of reference for the position to be considered further. It was also agreed to explore co-option of members of the public.

1.6.4 **Parish Paths and P3 Co-ordinator:** Miss Westgarth (P3 co-ordinator) and Mrs Hyde.

- To monitor all public rights of way in the parish
- To draw up annually a proposal for improvement and maintenance for public rights of way in the village
- To apply for and spend in conjunction with the Clerk, the annual County Council's parish paths grant
- Must have due regard for the Parish Council's Standing Orders.
- May seek advice or information from the District or County Councils and/or other body to enable it to understand or carry out its duties more effectively.
- Should liaise with other Parish Council committees as appropriate.

Other

Mrs Hyde will discuss with Miss Westgarth if additional members would be of benefit on the Parish Paths Group.

Given that several members were absent it was agreed that absent members should indicate at the next meeting which Groups and Committees they wished to join.

1.7 To inspect any deeds and trust instruments in the custody of the Council

It was noted that the following sites had all been registered and the documents were available:

- Allotments, Long Road
- Recreation Ground and land extension
- Path at Green End
- Jane's Estate
- Village Hall sites
- Watts Wood

It was noted that the registration of the pond is in hand and statutory declarations to support the application have been received. Leach Homes land is being registered following its transfer to the Parish Council. The S106 funding is still outstanding.

2. Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

2.0.1 Apologies were received from Miss Westgarth, Mrs Horne Mr Charge, Mr Rowlands and Dr Rintoul (all out of parish) and also Mrs Stoehr (Clerk).

2.0.2 Declarations were received as follows:

- Dr Roscoe declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item: 8.2 by virtue of his employment and also as the adjacent landowner.
- Dr McCabe declared an interest in personal and prejudicial item 6.1.2 as Chairman of the Help Scheme.
- Mrs Morison declared an ongoing interest in item 7.1.1

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting on 9 April 2008

On a proposition by Mrs Morison, seconded by Dr McCabe the minutes of the meeting on 9 April 2008 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman after one amendment in item 2 'Mach' should be spelt 'March'.

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

4.1 (7.5) ACRE Community awards

It was noted that an article was placed in Comberton Contact inviting a co-coordinator but no one has come forward.

5. County Councillor and District Councillor reports & questions

Cllr Harangozo highlighted that he had nothing specifically to report.

Cllr Harangozo was asked to find out what happens with tree works applications as they do not appear on the website and the Parish Council is not informed of the outcome.

It was noted that Dr Chambers and Mr Hollick attended a meeting at CVC as the Parish Council's representatives. Dr Chambers provided a brief summary of the meeting. Notes taken at the meeting are to be distributed to all members and a copy sent to Cllr Harangozo for his information.

It was noted that no report had been received from Cllr D Baldwin.

6. Finance and procedure

6.1 To receive the financial report and to approve the payment of bills¹

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: E-On £226.22 and Grounds by Rounds £414.54.

SCDC (rates)	£129.00
Open Spaces Society (annual subscription)	£30.00
Grounds by Rounds (grass cutting)	£103.64
CALC (affiliation fee)	£572.23
Cambs Fire Authority (fire alarm)	£86.60
Connections Bus Project (youth bus)	£835.29
CPRE (affiliation fee)	£27.00
RT Abraham (handyman)	£42.00
LGS Services (HMRC returns)	£52.88
LG Stoehr (salary)	£144.69
NALC (subscription renewal)	£13.50
LGS Services (admin support)	£947.72
BT (telephone bill)	£57.00
A Marsh (pavilion cleaning)	£120.00

6.1.1 Insurance policy and fidelity guarantee review

The insurance was reviewed and the level of cover, including fidelity guarantee was considered to be satisfactory.

6.1.2 To consider S137 donations

6.1.2.0 In response to the letter from St Mary's Church Comberton² seeking financial support the proposal by Mrs. Hyde seconded by Dr McCabe that in accordance with its powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Council donate £750 to the Church which, in the opinion of the Council is in the interests of the area and its inhabitants, was carried unanimously

6.1.2.1 Dr McCabe having declared an interest left the room while it was being discussed. Mrs. Morison chaired the meeting for this item only.

In response to the request for financial assistance from Comberton Village Help Scheme³ the proposal by Mrs. Morison seconded by Dr Chambers that in accordance with its powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Council donate £1,500 to Comberton Village Help Scheme which, in the opinion of the Council is in the interests of the area and its inhabitants, was carried unanimously.

The S137 regulations are to be circulated to members for guidance when considering future requests for financial support.

Dr McCabe rejoined the meeting.

6.2 Annual Reviews

6.2.1 Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Risk Assessment review

It was noted that these had been updated twice in the last year and agreed that no further changes were required at this time.

6.2.2 Employee and admin support annual reviews

It was agreed to carry this item forward to the next meeting for consideration.

6.2.3 Internal audit review and to appoint the Internal Auditor

It was unanimously agreed to appoint Mrs. Chambers again as internal auditor for the FY ending 2009. It was noted that she is no relation to Dr Chambers.

6.3 To approve the accounts, complete the annual return and the statement of assurance

On a proposition by Mrs Morison, seconded by Dr Chambers the accounts were approved by resolution of Comberton Parish Council and the statements in section 2 of the annual return were all answered 'Yes' apart from the Trust Funds which was not applicable. The Chairman signed sections 1 & 2 and the supporting accounts on the Parish Council's behalf.

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

7.1 Planning Committee including

The planning report⁴ was taken as read.

On a proposition by the Chairman it was agreed to take item: 7.1.1& 7.1.2 together.

Mrs Morison having declared an interest in this item left the room whilst both matters were discussed.

7.1.1 Northern Affordable Homes Planning

It was noted that a meeting is due to take place on Friday between the Developer, the Parish Council's Working Group and Nigel Blazebly.

On a proposition by Dr Chambers, seconded by Dr Roscoe it was unanimously agreed to accept the recommendation from the Planning Group that the Parish Council recommend refusal of the application with the following comments (in no particular order of importance):

- Any development should be phased to minimise impact during and after construction
- The development should be further south
- Plots 3 – 5 have excessively large gardens leading to "dead space" that may be used for dumping or a focus of antisocial behaviour.
- There is a suspiciously large gap between properties leading to the area mentioned in point C above leading to speculation that further development there is planned.
- The basic design of the houses is acceptable but they will be noticeably small
- So-called "visitor parking" intended as a sweetener for The Valley residents to park in is too far from those residents and won't be used.
- The bend in The Valley where residents currently park is to be grassed, it should be bricked.

- It seems there are some fairly obvious design features in place to ensure the development can be extended in the future. Reversing the crescent shape would prevent this from happening and provide more public space.
- There is an existing antisocial element in The Valley; this development does nothing to combat this.
- How are gardens marked out? Chain link fences?
- The permissive path is not a Right of Way and could easily be lost. Greater protection is required.

7.1.2 NATS – Air traffic consultation⁵

It was noted that the Parish Council received no responses to the articles placed in Contact. It was agreed that the Parish Council would make no response on this consultation.

7.2 Recreation Ground Working Group

This item is to be carried forward to the next meeting.

7.3 Affordable Housing Working Group

It was noted that the Group is due to meet on Friday. Carried forward to the next meeting.

7.4 Parish Plan Working Group, Highways & Transport & Recreation sections

The Parish Plan Report⁶ was noted. It was agreed to carry this item forward to the next meeting.

Dr Chambers left the meeting.

7.5 TWG Annual Report⁷

Noted.

8. To consider matters arising out of correspondence/communications received

8.1 Brian Cook - Village Hall & APM

The letter from Brian Cook⁸ was noted and considered. In response to the two points he raised:

- APM - It was noted that the APM is a meeting of the parishioners not a meeting of the Parish Council and is an opportunity for all village groups and organisations to report on what they have been doing and traditionally the time for the Parish Council to present its audited accounts. Any PC members that attend the APM are there as parishioners not as Parish Councillors.
- Village Hall Fence – It was agreed by all that the current fence is adequate and appropriate as the Village Hall is set in a rural setting. On a proposition by Dr McCabe, seconded by Mrs Hyde it was unanimously agreed to keep the existing fence which can be easily renovated and arrange for the Handyman to undertake any necessary repairs and re-varnish it. It was noted that the fence is being used as a notice board and agreed to liaise with the Trustees if a separate notice board or defined area would solve this.

8.2 CCC - Cambridge University Bridges⁹

Dr Roscoe declared an interest in this item. The letter about the proposed works was noted.

8.3 Parish Pond Survey¹⁰

8.3.0 It was noted that Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biological Records Centre coordinating a pond survey. It was agreed that the Parish Council should participate in the survey and also that an article is to be put in Contact about the survey.

The Parish Council supported in principle the suggestion that the willows at the edge of the pond and on the island need to be removed but was against the use of chemicals because of the possible impact on wildlife. It was agreed that Mrs Morison and the Tree Group should explore what options were available and seek some advice on the implications before considering this further at a future meeting.

8.4 SCDC Draft Homelessness Policy¹¹
Noted.

9. **Closure of meeting**

It was noted that Leach Homes have planted ‘hybrid bluebells’ but that a resident has planted the native species. It was agreed to monitor if there is any cross pollination.

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

Signed Chairman date

NB:

- Unless indicated otherwise all actions arising from the Council’s decisions in these minutes will be carried out by the Clerk as Proper Officer on the Parish Council’s behalf as part of her normal duties.
- These documents below are listed as background information to the correspondence and documents that the Council considered and do not form part of the minutes.

¹ Financial Report

² Letter / request for financial assistance St Mary’s Church

³ Letter / request for financial assistance Comberton Village Help Scheme

⁴ Planning Report

⁵ NATS – Air traffic consultation

⁶ Parish Plan Report

⁷ TWG Annual Report

⁸ Letter Brian Cook re: Village Hall & APM

⁹ CCC - Cambridge University Bridges

¹⁰ Parish Pond Survey

¹¹ SCDC Draft Homelessness Policy