

COMBERTON PARISH COUNCIL
The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on
Wednesday 12 September 2012 in the Village Hall at 7.30pm

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| Members present: | Miss A Bacon ^(AWB) (Chairman) | Dr J McCabe ^(JM) |
| Councillors: | Mr B Pemberton ^(BP) | Mr H Griffiths ^(HG) |
| | Mr S Moffat ^(SM) | Mr A Hollick ^(AH) |
| | Mr R Elleray ^(RE) | Mr T Scott ^(TS) |
| | Mrs J Preston ^(JP) | Miss C Westgarth ^(CW) |

In attendance: 119 members of the public, Mr John Hesp (applicant) and Mr Keith Hutchinson (Consultant), Mr Philip Peacock (ACRE), County Cllr Fiona Whelan, District Cllr Steve Harangozo and Mrs G Stoehr (Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence and declarations of interest and to note resignations

1.1 To consider the model Code of Conduct

It was unanimously agreed to adopt the revised model Code of Conduct^(Prop SM, 2nd HG)

1.2 To consider the procedure for dispensations under the Code of Conduct

The model dispensations procedure was adopted and it was unanimously agreed that the Council delegates the power to grant dispensations to the Clerk. The power rests with the relevant authority under section 33(1) of the Localism Act 2011 and the basis is set out under section 33(2).^(Prop HG, 2nd JM)

1.3 To receive declarations of interests from councillors on items on the agenda

Cllr Bacon declared a pecuniary interest in item 5.4 (LDF) with regard to site 225, as a resident of Swaynes Lane.

Cllr Moffat declared a pecuniary interest in item 5.4 (LDF) with regard to site 225, as a resident of Swaynes Lane.

Cllr Scott declared a pecuniary interest in item 5.4 (LDF) as tenant of two parcels of land.

Cllr Pemberton declared a pecuniary interest in Item 5.4.1 (South Street allotments site) as an allotment holder.

Cllr McCabe declared a pecuniary interest in Item 5.4 (LDF) with regard to site 110 and in Item 5.4.1 (South Street allotments site) as an allotment holder.

Cllr Preston declared a possible pecuniary interest in Item 5.4. (the site in Long Road) as a resident of Long Road.

Cllr Hollick declared a possible pecuniary interest in the site off Swaynes Lane as a resident of Swaynes Lane.

1.4 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any)

None.

1.5 To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate

None.

Comments & observations from members of the public

A resident requested an update regarding land and ditches in Swaynes Lane. This will be considered under Item 3.2.

Questions were asked regarding the proposed change of village status.

A resident asked about Normandy Close and what was happening about the children's play area, since a sum of money had been set aside for this.

A resident and Working Group member spoke of the wide consultation and issued an open invitation for all to comment. Concerns were expressed at the lack of public contribution.

A resident asked what was being done about flooding from Normandy Close. Cllr Hollick reported that he had spoken to Pat Matthews of SCDC who has spoken to the developer about storage tanks. Concerns were expressed that if more development took place, the drainage would be insufficient. Homes in Normandy Close were still on the market, the allotments in Long Road and Fox's Way now become flooded and the view was expressed that more development would make matters worse.

A resident stated that he had only learned of the SCDC proposals in the last few days and others stated that they have not received notifications. The Parish Council apologised for this. It was observed that it was the responsibility of SCDC to check that drainage was sufficient before granting planning permission.

A resident commented that the road improvements in the centre of the village were welcome but improvements were also required elsewhere. Cllr Whelan will be inspecting along with the Highways Supervisor and prioritising work. Concerns were expressed that grips in Swaynes Lane had not been done.

A resident asked what obligations rested on developers when they damaged pavements. A new developer was now dealing with 3 Long Road. Cllr Whelan will report the matter to Highways. The question was raised as to why the roads into Comberton had been left in such a poor state for so long.

A resident expressed opposition to development in the village and the re-classification of the village. It was felt that amenities would not develop in parallel. There were traffic implications for the school. Development would cause the erosion of the Green Belt and there was no guaranteed improvement of amenities concurrently. The meeting applauded this view.

Attention was drawn to sewerage problems that would ensue from development, such as had occurred at Comberton Village College due to the absence of a pipe connection. Cllr Whelan explained that there were tanks under the grass in front of the college. The sewage capacity was felt to be inadequate. Flooding had occurred at the Village College due to the flood plain and residents were encouraged submit any information that they had to the Parish Council.

A new resident reported that he had checked on the District Councillor's attendance at District Council meetings and reported on meetings that Cllr Harangozo had not attended.

A resident asked how all the residents' responses to the consultation would be counted. It was stated that an evidence based response to the LDF consultation was required. It had been understood that SCDC would take the names on the slip as a formal response but the resident was urged to write formally to SCDC as well. Cllr Moffat undertook to check the position.

Residents reported problems responding on SCDC's website. Cllr Whelan urged residents to continue to respond and she will place some forms in the library. Also suggested were the Doctors' and shop.

Queries were raised about the geology of the sites, for example site 110 Birdline Farms West was considered unstable as being on gault clay and river gravel. The geological map and civil engineer's report was noted. Drainage sites and 3 and 2 both lowest lying Tit Brook as boundary. Details of blockage due to flooding. The ability of the brook to cope was questioned.

A resident spoke with regard to South Street allotments and asked about the possibility of the owner developing the site.

A resident asked whether the proximity of the telescope might prohibit development. Cllr Harangozo reported that only large-scale industrial activity would prohibit development in this way. A resident disagreed and stated that the Mullard Radio telescope opposed the development and was preparing a report for submission.

Further concerns were raised about Tit Brook. A resident highlighted that flooding was mentioned in their insurance policy.

Cllr Harangozo explained his role as District Councillor and confirmed that he had attended the SCDC discussions in June about the LDF Issues and Options proposals. He gave reasons for not attending other meetings and explained that for important issues others could stand in for him if necessary. He had received representations both for and against the proposals.

Cllr Harangozo outlined SCDC's views on the planning process with the publicising of the Planning Framework and the Government's intention to promote growth. He stated that planning should support growth and each district was required to promote jobs and housing. He expressed the view that SCDC's position is to promote job creation in this district despite there being almost full employment. The aim of the Conservative Council was now to accelerate development. Cllr Harangozo explained that he tried to represent the views of residents but that they must make high-quality representations to SCDC, based on planning-related issues, of which he provided examples.

Cllr Bacon left the meeting at 8.40 pm and returned at 8.42 pm.

A traffic impact assessment is required.

In response to a query, it was considered useful to include scientific studies.

A question was asked about developers putting in infrastructure, and the flooding at Normandy Close was referred to.

Cllr Harangozo expressed the view that it would not be possible to prevent development or change the SCDC stance. The policy of infill with small developments would come to an end and the consequence would be that affordable housing, already over-subscribed in Comberton, would not be built. The village would need to help shape its future development. Cllr Harangozo stated that he did not support the bandwagon of development but development that improves quality of life was desirable.

The meeting noted the Government's recent announcement that the requirement for affordable housing was being dispensed with. Cllr Harangozo expressed the view that affordable housing, for which there was a need, would have to be paid for by rate payers.

A resident asked whether SCDC would still seek to retain some direction in relation to eligibility for affordable housing. Cllr Harangozo outlined the allocation process. When challenged by a resident, he clarified that if the housing was built it would not provide for the people of the village. He requested that people with information supply it to the working group to strengthen the Parish Council's vote.

Two questions were put to the meeting to gauge strength of feeling on this matter. Non parishioners stood to one side of the room while the show of hands took place. For the 109 residents who remained at the meeting.

Question 1 – Did the residents present support the view that Comberton should retain its Group village classification? The result was 106 in support of retaining the status and 3 against.

Question 2 – Did the residents present support development on green belt land – None in favour, 105 against development, and 4 abstentions.

Cllr Moffat reported on the background and method of the Parish Council's consultation, which was available on www.comberton.org.uk. This contained 176 signatures endorsing the Parish Council's stance. Residents were thanked for all their input and for taking the time to write to the Parish Council with their views on this very important matter.

On a proposition by the Chairman, it was agreed to vary the order of business to take Items 5.4 and 5.4.1 at this point.

5.4 SCDC LDF Issues and Options consultation

Cllrs Scott and Preston, having declared a pecuniary interest, left the meeting at 9.30 pm while the Parish Council discussed the site and the recommendation of the Working Group.

Site 158 - It was agreed to approve the Working Group's response on this site ^(Prop SM, 2nd AB, carried with 5 in favour and 2 abstentions).

Site 104 – It was unanimously agreed to approve the Working Group's response ^(Prop SM, 2nd JM).

Cllr Preston returned at 9.40 pm.

Site 110 – Cllr McCabe left the meeting at 9.40 pm. It was unanimously agreed to approve the Working Group's proposed response on this site. ^(Prop SM, 2nd CW).

Cllr Scott returned to the meeting at 9.43 pm.

Site 225 – Cllr Westgarth took the Chair for this item. Cllrs Bacon, Hollick and Moffat left the meeting at 9.43 pm. It was agreed to approve the Working Group's response for the site for this site ^(Prop CW, 2nd JM, carried with 2 abstentions).

It was unanimously agreed to support the SCDC proposal that the other sites, 080, 079 and 087 should remain rejected ^(Prop AB, 2nd JM)

It was unanimously agreed to support the SCDC proposal that Site 181 should remain rejected by SCDC. ^(Prop AB, 2nd SM)

The Council discussed the consultation. Concerns were expressed regarding the declining number of residents in the village and the impact on Meridian School. There was a lack of housing however the consensus was that growth was required

It was agreed that the Parish Council should adopt the Working Group's recommendation as its response to the consultation and that they be delegated to submit this to SCDC. ^(Prop SM, 2nd TS, carried with 2 against)

The Working Group was authorised to prepare a press release for adoption at the October meeting.

The meeting applauded the Council and the Working Group and Cllr Elleray were thanked for all their hard work. The Chairman was thanked by a resident for chairing the meeting.

The meeting was suspended at this point and the public session resumed to allow Mr Hesp and Mr Hutchinson to speak. They outlined their procedure and reasons for addressing the Council, requesting that the Council consider changing the village envelope to allow a new dwelling on land at West Street.

5.1.1 Hutchinsons proposed development Land off West Street

This matter had been referred back to the Parish Council by the Planning Committee as this was a request to support an application in principle rather than it being a planning application, as the site lay in Toft parish and was outside the village envelope. It was agreed that the Parish Council would support their request for a change in the village envelope and SCDC be notified of the Parish Council's view. ^(Prop AB, 2nd SM, carried with 4 in favour 1 against and 5 abstentions)

Cllr Griffiths left the meeting at 10.01 pm.

The meeting was suspended for the public session to continue. Cllr Whelan stated that she would represent the views of nine villages in responding to the consultation. Her written report was taken as read. This included the Community Payback team and their availability to carry out work in villages. Cllr Whelan highlighted the need to attract more representatives from other villages apart from Cambourne, to the Police Panel meetings.

Cllr Griffiths returned during this item at 10.05 pm.

5.4.1 Heesom Green Partnership – South Street Allotments site

Cllrs Pemberton and McCabe left the meeting at 10.10 pm, having declared an interest as allotment holders. Cllr Preston left the meeting and did not return. It was agreed ^(Prop SM, 2nd AB) that the Parish Council did not support the inclusion of the current South Street Allotments site in the South Cambs District Council's Local Development Plan.

On a proposition by the Chairman, it was agreed to take Item 3.3 next.

3.3 (3.1) Comberton Village Hall Trust Deed

Mr Philip Peacock, Community Facilities Manager at Cambridgeshire ACRE, had been asked to look at the governance of the building. He outlined the key documents and dates pertaining to the leases and trust deeds and described the changes to Charity law that took place in around 2006. He reported that Comberton Parish council had no rights to appoint the Trust Deed under the current document but that ideally it should have a representative on the management committee. If over 50% of the income is non-charitable then the Charity Commissioners will consider whether the status should still be charitable.

Cllr Hollick applied for a dispensation to take part in discussions about the village hall as the Parish Council's representative.

He was granted a dispensation to speak but not to vote.

It was agreed to carry this matter forward to next spring.

Cllr Hollick re-joined the meeting at 10.30 pm.

3.5 (3.3) QEII Fields Challenge – to consider whether to proceed

Mr Peacock reported that he had looked at the NALC Solicitors advice and explained the benefit of the Scheme was that it protects the land from compulsory purchase and if this does occur the developer has to give land to equal value in return. It was agreed to continue with the application for the fields in Trust Challenge and register for a non-charitable trust on the recreation ground and land extension. Mr Peacock was thanked for attending and his assistance and advice.

The agenda was reviewed at this point and the following items were deferred to the next meeting due to the lateness of the hour.

3.1 To appoint a Vice-Chairman

3.4 (3.2) Bollards, Hillfield Road – to consider quotation and correspondence from residents

3.6 (3.6) Proposal for 10% retention for large contracts

3.7 (5.3) Parish Council land and encroachment – to review and consider any action required

3.8 (June) To consider Tennis Court surface repairs and line marking quotes

5.3 Transport Working Group – Carried forward. It was noted that the Minor Improvements Scheme bid was unsuccessful. The Barton Road speed reduction scheme has been advertised in the local press by the County Council.

6.1 Mark Deas Cambs ACRE – Housing Needs survey

6.2 (5.4.2) Comberton FC complaint regarding charging for training and friendlies – referred to the Recreation Working Group and the Finance and Budget Working Groups to make a recommendation to the next meeting.

6.3 Comberton FC request for hedge behind goals to be cut referred to the Recreation Working Group and the Finance and Budget Working Groups to make a recommendation to the next meeting.

Taken as read:

3.2 (Comments) Report on ditches and meeting with Pat Matthews

4.2 Moore Stephens Audit conclusion

- 4.3 Clerk overtime for FOI requests
- 5.1 Report of the Planning Committee
- 5.2 Recreation Ground Working Group. Cllr Griffiths reported that no feedback had been received from the Sports Clubs.
- 6.5 SCDC Grants Funding review consultation – noted.

2. To approve the minutes of the last meeting on 11 July 2012

The minutes of the previous meeting on 11 July were unanimously approved ^(Prop AB, 2nd CW), as a true record and signed by the Chairman at the end of the meeting, after amendments under Item 5.2 to read “Needs a football development plan and needs the support of football clubs with youth teams”; and under Item 5.6 line 3 – replace “enhanced” with “better served group” and under paragraph 3, delete “to consider the draft document being produced by the Working Group so that the Council could approve its circulation to each home in the village” and amend to read “meet in August if necessary.”

3. Matters arising or carried forward from the meeting or a previous meeting for discussion or decision and to note the Clerk’s report

The Clerk’s report, which included background to items on the agenda and items and matters arising, was noted.

3.9 (3.6) Recreation ground outstanding fencing repair

It was noted that J Cobb and Sons had not repaired the v-post fencing or returned the Council’s pavilion keys. Quotes for stabilising the fencing were considered and it was agreed to write to John Cobb requiring him to repair the wobbly v-post fencing within ten working days from the date of the letter being sent otherwise the Parish Council would appoint another contractor to do the work and would seek to recover the costs through the courts.

3.10 (5.2) Installation of a barrier to stop cars driving onto the recreation ground

The quotation from Cambridge Outdoor Living for £460.00 plus VAT to provide a length of v-post fencing to fill the gap from the end of the wall by the pavilion door and the end of the new v-post fencing and remove the old litter bin from site was considered and this was accepted. ^(Prop HG, 2nd JM)

3.11 (5.5.1) New benches – to consider where these should be installed

Cllr Scott declared an interest member of Barton Parish Council and Cllr Moffat declared an interest as a member of the play equipment charity. There was a consensus installation should be delayed and it was agreed ^(Prop AB) to ask Cllr Scott to liaise with Barton Parish Council and store them until the Parish Council reaches a decision. This matter was carried forward to allow members to look at suitable locations during the Assets Walk.

4. Finance, procedure & risk assessment

4.1 To receive the financial report and to approve the payment of bills

The financial report was received and considered. This was checked by a member against the invoices and statements before the cheques were signed at the end of the meeting. It was agreed ^(Prop AB, 2nd SM) that the payments as listed in the financial report should be paid, plus R Sewell (gardening) £45.00, and CGM (Cambridge) Ltd (grass cutting) £987.18.

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| CGM (Cambridge) Ltd (Grass cutting) | £983.82 |
| CGM (Cambridge) Ltd (Grass cutting) | £692.18 |
| S & J Cleaning (Pavilion cleaning) | £84.00 |
| S & J Cleaning (Pavilion cleaning) | £126.00 |
| Connections bus (Youth bus) | £1170.00 |
| Mills and Reeve (Legal advice on FOI relating to Olde | £264.00 |

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| Farm) | |
| Moore Stephens (Annual Audit) | £487.20 |
| Cambridge Outdoor Living (Bollards/Jubilee posts) | £135.00 |
| C Stewart (Salary) | £54.68 |
| LG Stoehr (Salary) | £514.29 |
| LGS Services (Admin support) | £1688.66 |
| LGS Services (Admin support) | £1522.48 |
| Came and Co (Insurance) | £1518.68 |
| S & J Cleaning (Pavilion cleaning) | £84.00 |
| Eon (Electricity) | £78.18 |
| Cambridge Water (Pavilion water) | £56.16 |

The estimate from CCC for speed humps markings £55 plus VAT and disabled bay markings £90 plus VAT in the recreation ground car park which had been accepted by the Clerk was noted:

Cllr Westgarth reported on the background to Footpath 5 and that the County Council had objected to the Parish Council's recent replacement waymarking post. It was agreed to write to CCC to put forward the Parish Council's case and ask the Officer to reconsider his position/

3.12 Land at The Valley – transfer

The Clerk reported and summarised the Solicitor's letter and the terms of the transfer which is to be emailed to all members.

It was noted that the transfer included

- A covenant which prevented access over the northern boundary to the land to the north without the Parish Council's consent.
- Seven parking spaces rather than the original five.

The transfer was approved for signing by two Council members.

7. Closure of meeting

The meeting closed at 11.16 pm.

SignedChairmandate
