

## **Swilland and Witnesham grouped Parish Council**

Clerk: Mr. Nick Stanley, Newlands, Hall Lane, Witnesham IP6 9LP

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### **Minutes of Parish Council meeting** held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2010

Present: Mr. Lightfoot (Chair), Mr. Rush, Mr. Hindle, Mrs. Shaw, Mr. Nicol, Mr. Noble, Mr. Tyrell, Mrs. Camp.

Also present: PCSO Michael Sarbutts, County Councillor Peter Bellfield.

1. **Apologies:** The Chairman welcomed all Councillors to the meeting and apologies were received from Mrs. Reynolds.
2. **Minutes of previous meeting:** Approval of the minutes was proposed by Mr. Rush, seconded by Mr. Noble and agreed unanimously.
3. **Matters Arising:** There were no matters arising.
4. **Declarations of interest:** There were no declarations of interest.
5. **County Councillor Report:** On the subject of Local Government Reorganisation Councillor Bellfield reported that it was being seen as a complete debacle. Norwich was to be granted Unitary Authority status but the Secretary of State could not make up his mind with regard to Suffolk. It has now been suggested that a Countywide Convention be convened but no one appeared to know what this was. Everyone has accepted that no decision will be made before the General Election. The effect of all this confusion is very low moral within Suffolk County Council with employees not knowing whether they will have jobs in the long term.

Councillor Bellfield also reported that the 2.45% rise in the Council Tax is the lowest ever increase. There are difficult years ahead with reduced funding from central government which will inevitably mean reduced spending across all of the County's services. Perhaps one of the benefits is that County and State Departments are looking to work together to spend money more efficiently.

Councillor Bellfield reported that Suffolk County Council is funding the 40 mph signs for Rose Hill, Witnesham.

According to a nationwide Times survey Suffolk County Council was, reported Councillor Bellfield, the best County to work for.

6. **Police Report:** PCSO Michael Sarbutts presented PC Howgego's report (attached) in her absence. He stated that 33% of the reported crimes in Witnesham since the last Parish Council meeting were avoidable; vehicle taken with spare key left in vehicle, driven around and then left further up the road, outbuilding entered using key left under door and bicycle stolen from within. PCSO Sarbutts stressed the importance of residents taking greater responsibility for their own property.

Speed checks have been carried out in High Rd, Swilland, no offences found, and Upper Street, Witnesham, 1 x Fixed Penalty Notice issued.

Since Weyland Road was made a priority on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2010, there has been only one recorded crime, which is very unlikely to be linked with the Anti-social Behaviour problem in the area. Residents also felt that there has been a significant reduction in the amount of times youths have been causing problems in the area. According to police patrols, only a handful of youths have been encountered in the area on a few occasions. Youths spoken to have stated that there is 'nothing for them to do in the village'. Patrols will continue and any incidents will continue to be logged.

PCSO Sarbutts requested that residents continue to call the police when an incident is happening to enable them to encounter those people involved.

The Mobile Police Station will be in Weyland Road on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> April and Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2010 from 11:45-13:15 hrs.

With regards to the enquiry made at the last PCM about this damage caused in September to the Church and the Village Hall windows, PCSO Sarbutts reported that all leads had been followed up and that no witnesses or suspects or evidence had been found. Councillor Hindle reiterated what he said at the January meeting that the Police should have followed up the incidents at the time of the offences. PCSO Sarbutts said that he would investigate these offences further and report back at the May meeting.

7. **Finance:** The Clerk as Responsible Finance Officer reported on:

**i) Current Account.** The current balance as at 17<sup>th</sup> March 2010 was £1059.33

**ii) Ipswich Building Society.** The current balance is £13,556.92

**iii) To approve the following payments:**

Clerk's salary	£ 370.08
Philip Keys – repairs to Car Park Fence	£ 240.00
W. Archer – Maintenance - Jan to March	£ 60.00
Property Aid – Redecoration of Village Sign	£ 407.10
SALC – Clerk's Networking Day	£ 17.62
Suffolk County Council – Grass Cutting	£ 645.50
EDF – Telephone Box Electricity	£ 41.64
Glasdon Ltd. – Nestor Grit/Salt Bins	£ 392.92
SALC – New Clerk's Day	£ 52.88
Philip Keys – Repairs to Changing Room Doors	£ 370.00
Mrs. J. Reynolds – Witnesham Hedgerow Frame	£ 129.60
Witnesham Baptist Church – Donation	£ 150.00

These payments were proposed by D. Noble, seconded by Mr. Nicol and approved unanimously.

**iv) Budget 2010 – 2011.** The Clerk as Responsible Finance Officer presented a draft budget for 2010 – 2011. The Budget was approved with the following modifications:

- The contribution to Speedwatch be reduced from £300 to £30.
- The allocation to Reactive Maintenance be increased from £1500 to £3000.
- The Parish Council make an annual donation of £200 to SORR.

- Money be allocated in the budget for Grit/Salt Bins on Rose Hill and at the junction of Struggler’s Lane and The Street, Winesham.

Mr. Hindle asked a question regarding the Parish Council’s 3 Year Car Park Contract with the Moon and Mushroom. The details would be confirmed later.

**Winesham Village Hall Boundary Fence.** (See attached) Mr. Lightfoot referred all Councillors to the previously distributed briefing paper. He said that since preparing this paper he had received an estimate of between £500 and £700 from Property Aid Ltd., a potential saving of £550, for the erection of a post and rail on the Village Hall boundary. The project was proposed by Mr. Rush and seconded by Mrs. Shaw and approved unanimously.

Clerk

**Winesham Village Hall: PA System and Hearing Loop.** (See attached) Mr. Lightfoot referred all Councillors to the previously distributed paper. The project was proposed by Mr. Noble and seconded by Mr. Nicol and approved unanimously.

Chair

**Swilland and Winesham: Wild Flower Planting.** (See attached) Mr. Lightfoot referred all Councillors to the previously distributed paper. Mr. Tyrell cautioned Councillors of the cost and labour involved in maintaining wild flowers. It was thought that in the second year of planting school children and residents may wish to become involved in a community effort and that this should be encouraged. The project was proposed by Mr. Hindle and seconded by Mr. Rush and approved unanimously.

Chair

**Swilland and Winesham Parish Council: Communication.** (See attached) Mr. Lightfoot referred all Councillors to the previously distributed paper. The paper stimulated much discussion:

- the most effective method of communication;
- the cost of replacing the Notice Boards;
- using technology more effectively to inform residents;
- the difficulty in publishing of Notices of meetings without Notice Boards;

It was agreed to fully discuss the subject later in the year.

**Telephone Box Electricity.** The Clerk explained that the cost of electricity to provide lighting in the Telephone Boxes had risen from £4.04 to £20.82 per month because EDF had imposed a standing charge of £17.14. By asking EDF to cut the electricity to the Telephone Boxes the Parish Council could make an annual saving of £250. Councillors were reluctant to cut the electricity to the Telephone Boxes and asked the Clerk to investigate the possibility of using Solar Panels to power the lights.

Clerk

8. **Highways: SORR:** Mr. Noble reported that Suffolk Coastal District Council planning services did not respond to letters and emails if they asked awkward questions. He added that due weight is not given to the views of Town and Parish Councils especially when they are at odds with big business. This lack of planning control is leading to breaches of Health and Safety regulations. Mr. Noble illustrated this point by

informing Councillors that there was no water on site to fight fires at Clopton Commercial Park and Gressingham. SORR has been very active in discussing these issues with the local MP and the Ombudsman. He concluded by saying that the real improvement must come through making the planning service fully accountable to elected members.

Chair

9. **Footpaths:** Mr. Hindle said he had nothing to report at the present time.
10. **Planning:** Mr. Lightfoot reported that the Planning Committee had held two meetings on the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2010 and 8<sup>th</sup> March 2010. Mr. Lightfoot said he was disappointed that SCDC had approved the Planning Application by Suffolk Heritage to build two dwellings to the rear of 29-39 Weyland Road.

Mr. Tyrell asked about the current development at Laurel House, Upper Street, Witnesham. Mr. Lightfoot said that the plans for this project had changed more than once with later versions being more appropriate to the area. There was, however, some uncertainty as to whether the developer was adhering to the planning application and this was currently being followed up by Mr. Lightfoot.

With regard to the Half Moon affordable housing, the prospective purchaser of the remaining (three bed-roomed) property had dropped out. Hastoes will re-advertise the property.

11. **Playing Field Management Committee:** Mr. Lightfoot reported that following the resignation of Mr. Coe Mr. Rush had volunteered to take on the role of Playing Field Manager for a period of one year. Mr. Rush said that he believed that all Councillors should take on this role in turn.

During the Playing Field management meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2010 the School's Headteacher, Mrs. Jan Hubbard, had presented the Committee with ideas for using the Telephone Boxes more creatively as thought up by Year 5 and 6 pupils. During a recent visit to the school the Clerk had asked the pupils to put more detail on their proposals. The Clerk also invited the pupils to present a report at the Annual Parish Meeting to be held at the Village Hall on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2010.

**Bottle Bank:** Mr. Lightfoot reported that he had met with Mr. David Fawcett, SCC Transport Manager, and Mr. Michael Porter, SCDC Waste Management, on the morning of 24<sup>th</sup> February.

He reported that Mr. Fawcett did not feel all that strongly about the positioning of the Bottle Bank; his past concerns were with the collection of the bins rather than the dropping off bottles by the public. Understandably, he said he feels that it is better to have such facilities off the highway.

Mr. Fawcett said he would support moving the Bottle Bank to its original position provided that there is no cost to SCC. It would be SCDC's responsibility to arrange for a short dropped kerb if one was needed and as the roadway bends the wrong-way it would be the responsibility of SWgPC to keep the hedges under control so that northbound drivers have good visibility on either side of the pick-up vehicle.

Mr. Porter is to seek funding for a dropped kerb and the construction of a firm base for the two bins. Mr. Lightfoot said that he made it clear that SWgPC would not be expected to contribute towards the cost of this work which could not be carried out before early 2011.

12. **SALC:** Mr. Lightfoot reported that the area meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2010 had clashed with a Planning Committee meeting and so Swilland and Witnesham Parish Council were not represented. Mrs. Shaw reported that she had recently attended a Planning Course which had been very informative.
13. **Village Hall Management Committee:** Mrs. Shaw said that she had nothing to report at the present.
14. **SCDC:** Mr. Lightfoot said there was nothing further to report other than what had already been reported by Councillor Bellfield.
15. **Correspondence:** The clerk had received a letter from Mrs. K. Hill the Treasurer of Witnesham Baptist Church, thanking the Parish Council for their donation of £150 (£75 per annum x 2).

The Correspondence File was passed around to all Councillors.

Mr. Lightfoot reminded Councillors that the next meeting was the Annual Parish Meeting to be held at 7:30 p.m. on the 21<sup>st</sup> April 2010.

**The meeting closed at 9:25 p.m.**