

**Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on
Wednesday 19th March 2014 at Witnesham Village Hall.**

Present: Mr. Rush (Chair), Mrs. Bartolome, Mrs. Camp, Mr. Darell-Brown, Mr. Everett, Mr. Hindle, Mr. Lightfoot, Dr. Nicol, Mrs. Pace, Mrs. Shaw and Mr. Wilks.

Also present: 4 Residents of Witnesham.

1. **Chairman's Welcome:** Mr. Rush welcomed everyone to the meeting and he introduced Sarah Bailey, the new Clerk with effect from the 1st April 2014, to the meeting. He wanted to record the Council's condolences on the recent death of Peter Shaw who served as a Parish Councillor representing Swilland from 1996 to 1998.
2. **Declarations of Interest:** Mrs. Camp - Item 6 – Donation to Witnesham Baptist Church.
3. **To receive apologies from Councillors not attending:** The Chairman accepted apologies from Mr. Henley, Mr. Laughlin, Ms. Reeve and Mr. Tyrrell.
4. **To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th January 2014:** Approval of the Minutes of the 15th January 2014 was proposed by Mrs. Shaw, seconded by Dr. Nicol and agreed unanimously.
5. **County Councillor and District Councillor Reports:** Both Councillors were absent from the meeting. However County Councillor Bellfield had sent a message via the Clerk to remind the Parish Council of the draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Suffolk Coastal District Council. In reducing the number of Councillors from 45 to 42 it was proposed that Witnesham and Swilland become part of a 3 Councillor ward including Rushmere. The general view was that our villages should remain part of a rural ward and the Clerk was asked to find out more details.
6. **Finance:**
 - i) **Current Account:** The current balance as at 4th January 2014 was £5,930.91
Ipswich Building Society: The current balance is £7,980.62 which includes £79.02 interest credited to the account on 30th November 2013.

ii) To approve the following payments:

EFMS	Grass Cutting at Playing Field	£ 817.63	
Witnesham Baptist Church	Donation	£ 80.00	
N. K. Stanley	Land Registry Searches	£ 51.60	
Crown Nursery Ltd.	Trees at Weyland Road	£ 161.70	
Crown Nursery Ltd.	Trees at Recreation Ground	£ 263.50	
N. K. Stanley	Petty Cash	£ 30.00	
R. J. Mills Pest Control	Moles at Playing Field	£ 60.00	R
P. Keys	Safety Work at Play Area	£ 165.00	
N. K. Stanley	Clerk's Salary – Jan, Feb, March	£ 481.24	
HMRC	Clerk's Tax – Jan, Feb, March	£ 120.20	

These payments were proposed by Mr. Hindle, seconded by Mr. Everett and supported unanimously.

Mr. Hindle asked if it would be possible for the Profit and Loss Statement provided at each meeting to be accompanied by a copy of the current year's budget. The Clerk said that he would ask the new Clerk to see if that was possible.

7. **Footpaths:** Mr. Hindle reported that in response to a request from a resident he had fitted wire netting to the bridge over the Fynn by the Churchyard. It was reported that the Bridleway by Newton Hall Marshes was almost unusable. Mr. Hindle said that he would take a look. The onus, he said, was on the landowner to maintain Footpaths and Bridleways. It was also noted that Footpaths last year were cut late. Mr. Hindle said that he would ask that they be cut on time this year.
8. **Planning:** Mr. Lightfoot reported that the Planning Committee had not met since the last Parish Council meeting. Mr. Hindle said that he was concerned at the volume of trees felled around the property Paradise Now on Mow Hill. Mr. Lightfoot said that he would consult with SCDC Planning to see if there any regulations regarding the extraction of timber.
9. **Police Report:** Mr. Rush said that he had received a report from the Police Service which stated that there had been five recorded crimes in Swilland and Witnesham since the January Parish Council meeting. Councillors said it would be useful if the rate of crime in our villages was compared to those in adjacent villages. It was also stated that given Councillors' local knowledge it would be beneficial if they could, where appropriate, be informed of the locations of crimes committed.
10. **Highways:**
 1. **Installation of Rumble Strips near bridge over the River Fynn.** Mr. Darell-Brown reminded the meeting of the background regarding this issue. He said that the rumble strips had been installed following a number of complaints from residents who were greatly concerned at speeding and motor accidents around the bridge over the River Fynn. Several options were initially investigated but the Parish Council had decided on a relatively low cost installation of coloured Rumble Strips which had recently been put in place. However after receiving several complaints from residents on the Ipswich Road/Rose Hill section Mr. Rush and Mr. Lightfoot had met on site with these residents who were extremely concerned with the noise and vibration when vehicles passed over the strips and expressed concerns that the installation the rumble strips was having a detrimental effect on their quality of life. Mr. Rush and Mr. Lightfoot confirmed that they agreed that given that these strips were only yards away from bedroom windows the noise level was indeed far worse that had been expected and accepted that during the summer when windows were open the noise would be far worse for residents than at present. The residents attending the Parish Council meeting said that they believed that they should have been consulted and given the opportunity to agree or oppose the proposal prior to the rumble strips being installed. It was suggested that the strips might wear down within 6 months but that was not seen as acceptable particularly as they were not causing traffic to slow down. Following much discussion the Council voted by a majority to totally remove the rumble strips on Ipswich Road.
 2. **Flooding in Mill Lane.** Mr. Rush reported that it was not the Parish Council's responsibility to clear field drains which had become blocked at the top of Mill Lane. He said that a letter had been sent to SCC's Flood Line who had advised that these were the responsibility of landowners. It appeared that some work had indeed been carried out which was noted and appreciated.
 3. **Pavement between Weyland Road and Acre Close.** Mr. Darell-Brown reported that he had followed up the report that the pavement between Weyland Road and Acre Close was in a poor state of repair. Mr. Darell-Brown said he had followed up his earlier complaint and he understood that work to repair the pavement will be carried out soon by SCC contractors.
 4. **Possible subsidence on the Ashbocking Road, Swilland B1078.** Mr. Darell-Brown said that he would follow up this complaint as reported in the January Minutes.

11. **Playing Field Management Committee:** Mr. Wilks reported that a meeting of the Committee had been held on 13th February 2014. The main area of discussion had been 'who owns/who is responsible for what?' It was becoming increasingly important that an understanding is agreed between all the parties involved.
12. **To receive reports regarding the Village Play Areas:**
 1. **Play Area adjacent to Witnesham Primary School.** Mr. Rush reported that the safety surface had been pressure washed and the gaps between the tiles filled with sand. As a result he believed that the area was now far less slippery. It was also reported that the contractor engaged to do the tree work at the playing field had reneged on the contract. The Clerk was asked to engage another contractor if it was not too late in the season.
13. **SALC:** Mr. Rush said that he had attended the SALC area meeting on 17th March 2014.
14. **Recreation Ground:** Mr. Rush thanked Mr. Hindle for his work in organising the planting of the additional trees at the Recreation Ground and on Weyland Road. Mr. Hindle said that the display of daffodils planted by children from Witnesham School at the Recreation Ground was stunning and a credit to the School and its pupils.
15. **Village Hall Management Committee:** Mrs. Shaw said that she had nothing to report at present.
16. **Allotments:** Mrs. Camp reported there was currently one plot at the Coopers Close site available for rent.
17. **Tree Officer:** Mr. Henley could not attend the meeting but had sent an email saying that he had nothing to report.
18. **Community Group:** Mrs. Camp reported that the Community Group had the following events organised for the coming year:
 - Village Weekend on the 12th and 13th July. The Village Show was to be held on the 12th and a Garage Sale on Sunday 13th;
 - Glut Fest later in the year;
 - Following the success of the 'Musical Evening' in November 2013 this was to be expanded to become a 'Musical Weekend' in November 2014.Mrs. Camp also reported that there was currently £460 in Community Group funds.
19. **Annual Parish Meeting:** Mr. Rush reported that the APM would take place in the Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. on the 16th April 2014. He urged all Councillors to attend.
20. **Correspondence**
 1. **Village Litter Pick:** Mr. Hindle reported that in his walks around the villages he felt that both villages were quite tidy at the moment and he felt that there was no need for a Litter Pick day. It was suggested that a letter be sent to Mr. And Mrs. Barraclough of Swiland thanking them for their efforts in keeping their neighbourhood litter free.
 2. **Broadband:** Dr. Nicol reported that Witnesham Telephone Exchange will be fitted with fibre cables in the near future which will enable faster broadband for residents.

The next meeting will be the APM on Wednesday 16th April 2014 at 7.30 p.m. in Witnesham Village Hall.

The Meeting closed at 9:00 p.m.