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Huntingdonshire
 DISTRICT COUNCIL

Lakefield Avenue, Little Paxton

Tel: 01480 – 473558
E Mail: j.willcock@cranfiel.ac.uk

45, Lakefield Avenue
Little Paxton
St Neots
Cambs PE19 6NX

Peter Watkins
Dir of Central Svcs & Monitoring Officer
Huntingdonshire District Council
Pathfinder House
St. Mary's Street
Huntingdon
PE29 3TN

Dear Mr Watkins

Re: Alleged Breach of Conduct

Thank you for your letter of 26th inst. concerning allegations brought by Mrs Dean. I would like to now respond in full and advise you of the true nature of why this case has been presented to you.

To respond to you letter in the order written:-

1. I can confirm that I categorically deny all alleged breaches of the relevant Code of Conduct.
2. There are, to my knowledge no relevant documents that I have had knowledge of that refer to this allegation, so therefore am unable to direct you towards anything pertinent.
3. I would be pleased for you to contact anyone and everyone who you may feel relevant to this 'investigation' and would suggest as a matter of course you speak directly to the Parish Clerk, Parish Chairman, and Mr Dring, who is the poor, unfortunate neighbour of Mrs Dean. They are almost certainly able to shed more light on this than I am and will hopefully provide an informed unbiased view on this whole unfortunate saga.

I think it appropriate to detail the chronological order of events so that you are more able to appraise why this malicious, spurious action has been brought forward and to provide some facts that I suspect have been sadly lacking up to now.

Mr Dring has lived in Lakefield Avenue for some time, I do not know how long, but before he moved to be Mrs Dean's neighbour I met him once, on Parish Council business when he was directly affected by a small infill development on the High Street that became Pipistrelle Close. It has always been Parish Council policy to canvas opinion of adjacent property owners when planning applications

are submitted and at the time Mr Dring contacted me to voice his concern regarding the development. His concerns were duly forwarded to the Council.

I do have a close friend who is a neighbour of Mrs Dean, but in the property the other side, at No 27, and it was only after Mr Dring moved that I realised he had bought the adjacent house to Mrs Dean. He uses the same gym as me so we would occasionally acknowledge each other at the gym, but I thinking calling that a close friendship is stretching credibility.

The whole issue of 'the fence' happened without my knowledge, when Mr Dring sought to replace a dilapidated post and wire fence, interspersed with hawthorn, which abutted the Parish Council playing field. I understand that he sought advice from the Parish Clerk as to what his options were as the post and wire fence was technically the boundary but trees planted within the fence had now matured to a size whereby they were sited on the boundary line but with girths of typically half a metre diameter. The subsequent detail must be sought from the Parish Clerk as I had no knowledge of involvement at this juncture but the outcome was that the fencing contractor that Mr Dring appointed placed a close boarded fence on the far side of the tree line – in effect placing his fence possibly as much as 300-450mm within the Parish boundary. This was immediately brought to the attention of the Parish Council by Mrs Dean and her friend Mr Dring's other neighbour, who exhorted the Parish Council to take legal action to redress this 'land grab'.

The issue was discussed at the next full Council meeting, when I, as Chairman of the Finance Cttee was concerned that we could potentially be engaging in expensive litigation against a parishioner when the facts regarding the advice given to Mr Dring were not absolutely clear. Subsequent inspection of the fencing further down the field towards the High Street highlighted that other parishioners could also become subject to retrospective court action by the Council over a similar sized strip of land, and my concern was to ensure that the Council did jump into action regarding legal proceedings without fully considering the implications of this initial action against Mr Dring. I made sure that when the decision was made I abstained from voting and hopefully the Council records will show this. I did ask for this detail to be recorded.

I did make one visit to Mr Dring's property to look at the position of the fence, and was so impressed with the quality of construction that I subsequently used the same contractor on my own property to replace a party fence.

I do back onto the village playing field in the same way that Mr Dring does but at that point the commonality ceases. I do not claim anything more than to be an acquaintance of Mr Dring and said so when this matter was discussed in the Council meeting. I know that many Councillors and the Clerk will corroborate this statement.

I do not understand why Mrs Dean has brought this complaint forward other than for malice and her inability to direct other agencies against Mr Dring. She has a history of harassing the poor unfortunate neighbour living in Mr Dring's property – she brought a court action against the previous owner and I understand that the police have been called recently to intercede in a case between her husband and Mr Dring, who subsequently was treated in casualty at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital.

She has already tried to report the Parish Council to whatever agency will listen to her regarding this affair but to date has not found anyone who will listen to her.

I find it very sad and a monumental waste of public time and money investigating, and potentially legitimising actions instigated by Mrs Dean, but I accept that there has to be a monitoring process to ensure that anyone at any level of public office complies with standards of behaviour. The unfortunate thing in this situation is that no standards or sanctions can be applied to Mrs Dean's behaviour.

The information above details my total involvement in this fiasco. At no time did I get involved in advising or interceding in this case, and the idea that I am a 'close friend' of Mr. Dring is absurd and just playing to Mrs Dean's paranoia. I have no knowledge of any documentation or data I may have passed on – to my knowledge anything that the Council handles is public domain anyway.

I would urge you to listen carefully to what the other Council officials and Clerk have to say on this matter, all of whom will, I'm sure corroborate what is stated above. The mere fact that Mrs Dean has finally found someone to 'take action on her behalf' may be construed by her as providing her succour in her vendetta against Mr Dring, which I consider a totally unnecessary action without any foundation in fact or substance and a complete waste of public funds.

A brief conversation with the Parish Clerk may have obviated this action at its commencement and allowed Mr Dring to enjoy his stay in Little Paxton rather than have to be concerned about what actions Mrs Dean may try and construct next. He already has to live with closed circuit recording television cameras trained on his property from Mrs Dean's which I'm sure must be in contravention of the Data protection Act and suspect like most normal people would prefer to live quietly and in peace with his neighbours.

It is a sad fact that Mrs Dean is denying him and his family that pleasure.

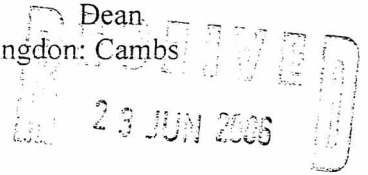
Should you require any further information or participation on my part I would be delighted to assist.

Yours sincerely

John Willcock

23 JUN 2006

Title	Mrs	RECEIVED	Dean
First name	Susan		
Address	29 Lakefield Avenue: Little Paxton: Huntingdon: Cambs		
Post code	PE19 6NZ		
Daytime telephone	01480 404034		
Evening telephone	01480 404034		
email	su.dean@virgin.net		



Please consider the complaint I have described below and in the evidence attached. I understand and accept that the details will normally be disclosed to the member, particularly if the matter goes through to investigation.

signature  date 19^h June 2006

YOUR COMPLAINT

Who are you complaining about?

Cllr J Willcock

Little Paxton Parish Council

WHAT ARE YOU COMPLAINING ABOUT

In April 2005 my neighbour erected a new fence, which adjoins the parish owned playing field. Myself and another parishioner pointed out to the Parish Clerk that my neighbour's contractors had exceeded his boundary by some ½ to 1 meter in places (this equates to approximately 15 square metres in total). I was told that although they were aware that he was erecting a new fence and the parish council had given his contractors permission to carry out the work from the parish council side they had not given him permission to exceed his boundary and that this would be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting to be held on the 4th May 2005.

I requested from the Parish Clerk a copy of the minutes of that meeting and was astonished to find that Cllr Willcock had declared no interest in this agenda item. Not only does Cllr Willcock's own property adjoin the playing field therefore any decisions made could ultimately effect him, but Mr & Mrs Dring whose fence it was that had encroached onto parish land are very good friends of Cllr Willcock. I requested all minutes from the Parish Clerk where this particular issue was on the agenda and note that on none of the minutes has Cllr Willcock declared an interest on the agenda item; this also includes the vote, which was held in private. I understand from the Parish Council that the final decision to allow Mr & Mrs Drings fence to remain in its present location was brought about because of financial restraints on the parish council's budget of which Cllr Willcock is the chairman

It has also come to my attention that correspondence that I have had with the Parish Council has been passed by Cllr Willcock to Mr & Mrs Dring without Mr & Mrs Dring going through the proper channels to obtain this and clearly without the knowledge of the Parish Clerk.

It is with deep regret that I feel the need to bring this matter to yourselves and whilst accepting the good work that the Parish Council does for the Village of Little Paxton I would be grateful if you could investigate my complaint as I feel aggrieved that Cllr Willcock has used his official position to the advantage of his friends.

I attach the following evidence:

- Minutes of meeting held on the 4th May 2005.
- Minutes of meeting held on the 2nd June 2005.
- Minutes of meeting held on the 7th July 2005.
- A letter dated 4th May 2006 from Mr & Mrs Dring confirming that they have had access to correspondence between the Parish Council and us.
- Letter dated 10th May 2006 from the Parish Clerk advising that no request to view our correspondence had been received from Mr & Mrs Dring.
- Letter dated 23rd May from the Parish Clerk reiterating that no request had been received from Mr & Mrs Dring or any information divulged from the Parish Office.

LITTLE PAXTON PARISH COUNCIL.

(Clerk of the Council. Mrs J Gellatly, 11 Hayling Avenue Little Paxton. St Neots. PE19 6HG)
(Telephone. 01480 470193) (e-mail. littlepaxton@hotmail.com)

Minutes of the Annual Full Council meeting held in the Committee Room in Little Paxton Village Hall on Wednesday 4th May 2005.

Present:

Cllrs A.Hilton,E.Timms,R.Russell, A.Denison, J.Willcock,M.Ross,
F.Owens,J.Blackburn,P.Martin,M.Creed ,Consultant John Browne, CCllr R Clarke and the Clerk J.Gellatly.

Agenda Item

- | | Power | Action |
|--|-------|--------|
| 1. All the elected Parish Councillors present signed their Declaration of Office. Those absent to be contacted by Clerk. | | Clerk |
| 2. Election of Chairman for 2005/2006. Cllr Alan Hilton advised he was resigning as Chairman and as a Parish Councillor. Cllr Alan Dension elected as Chairman .Proposed by Cllr E.Timms seconded by Cllr A Hilton. Cllr A Dension signed the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance. | | |
| 3. Election of Vice Chairman 2005/2006. Cllr E Timms was elected as Vice Chairman. Proposed by Cllr M Creed.Seconded by Cllr R Russell. | | |
| 4. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr A Hunt. | | |
| 5. Registration of Financial and other Interests.All Councillors in attendance signed the declaration that their financial and other interests remain unchanged. Clerk to contact those absent. | | Clerk |
| 6. Appointments to Sub-Committees and Meetings Calander.All councillors present completed their sub committee forms and all received a copy of the Meeting Calender.Clerk to contact those absent. | | Clerk |
| 7. To sign and approve the Minutes of meeting dated 7 th April 2005. Item 52(v) of the minutes amended to read 'redesignate' instead of 'relocate'. The amended minutes were approved and signed. | | |
| 8. Matters arising from previous Minutes in relation to the various projects to be discussed under Agenda Item 12. | | |
| 9: Members' declaration of Interest for items on the Agenda. Cllr M Creed advised prejudicial interest on Agenda Item 14.Cllr M Creed works for the Huntingdonshire PCT Cllr J.Blackburn advised personal interest on Agenda Item 14. Cllr Blackburn is a member of Save our Surgery Campaign group. | | |
| 10. Planning Committee Report. (see minutes of meeting held 14 th April 2005). Nothing to report. Minutes were approved and signed. | | |

11. Finance & General Committee Report

- (a) The accounts for year ended 31st March 2005 were approved.
Proposed by Cllr F.Owens,seconded Cllr J Blackburn.
- (b) Internal Auditors report accepted and approved.

12. Amenities Report-

- (a) Resurfacing footpath (Budget £17000).Clerk has obtained list of approved suppliers from Cambridgeshire County Council. Two further quotations have now been issued . Agenda Item for next Amenities meeting Clerk
- (b) Replacement fence (Budget£7500)Cllr J Blackburn & Cllr R Russell have inspected the two types of fencing. Clerk has contacted Bedfordshire Borough Council for references on Huntree Fencing. Type of bowtop or mesh fencing to be discussed at next Amenities meeting. Clerk advised that colour of fencing should not be soley green in order to comply with Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Agenda item for next Amenities meeting. Clerk
- (c) Replace wetpour junior swings (Budget£6000)Wicksteed have now provided their quote. References to be taken up for Anglian Playgound Services. Cllr E Timms to inspect work at Eynesbury Primary School and Cllr J Blackburn to inspect playpark behind Liddles supermarket. Agenda item for next Amenities meeting. Clerk
- (d) Replace and relay Astroturf playing surface (Budget £3500)Clerk has contacted Lindsay Winters,Parks & Leisure, Cambridge County Council who will provide a further quote for replacing Astroturf. Site visit to be arranged with Clerk & one of the Councillors. Clerk
- (e) Fencing on the playing field. Issue with a resident erecting a fence on playing field (with permission) and there is a dispute over boundary line. Two complaints received from other residents Clerk to contact Colin Meadowcroft, Legal & Estates, HDC for legal advice. Clerk
- (f) Litter in village. All agreed to check every street in village to ascertain worst areas for littering. Clerk to issue street plan to all councillors. Also street names plates to be checked for damage Agenda Item 16(f). Clerk
- (g) Dog handling classes on Playing field It has been brought to the Parish Council's attention that an individual has been taking dog handling classes behind the village hall on Tuesday evenings. This is not a suitable activity to be carried out on playing field, no permission has been requested and there is a bye law that all dogs should be kept on leads on the playing field. Clerk requested to write letter advising that classes must cease. Clerk
- (h) Village Newsletter articles- Ruth Kern from PARC project has been liasing with Cllr M Ross to place an article in next newsletter.

Meeting closed at 8.15pm . Cllr M Creed left the building.

14. Doctors Surgery

Michael Lynch (Chairman PCT) and Janet Dullaghan Director of Nursing & Clinical Services.

Mr Lynch advised that there had been three public meetings and a large written response over the future of the Doctors Surgery. Mr Lynch advised that every letter had been read by executive and non executive directors of the PCT. The formal consultation period will close on 6th May . There will be a public Board Meeting on the 25th May 2005 in the Village Hall in Little Paxton where hopefully a decision will be reached. The format of the meeting is not yet known He advised that the Patient & Public Involvement group have been working together with S.O.S.

My Lynch answered questions from the floor. Mr Peter Hagger, Chairman of SOS, mentioned that the staff at the PCT have been very co operative and are doing their utmost to ensure fairness. C Cllr Robert Clarke advised that HDC were fully supportive of the SOS campaign.

Mr Lynch wished to thank the people of Little Paxton for their complements about the care taking practice and for allowing the PCT to withdraw the original faulty consultation document and allowing them to start the process again.

Meeting reopened 8.40pm

14(b) Save our Surgery Campaign update

Cllr J Blackburn advised that there was now a good relationship with senior officers of the PCT and the S.O.S campaign group has been listened to. S.O.S feel that there is likely to be a positive outcome to the consultation.

(c.) Working with the S.O.S and PCT to consider building a new Doctors Surgery.

Cllr J Blackburn reported that if the surgery is saved we will need to look into the providing an improved facility. Cllr Blackburn proposed a new steering group to be formed to look into this. It was agreed in principle to join a new steering group. Cllr J Willcock, J Blackburn & A Denison to be representatives for the Parish Council. Item to be placed on next Full Council meeting Agenda. Letter to be drafted to HDC re the Rookery site.

Clerk

Clerk

13. Jubilee Clock .John Browne reported that a Faculty was required to remove and repair clock. This has taken almost a year to obtain. Consequently the cost of repairs have increased. The Parish Council presently holds £3603.11 and the repairs including VAT amount to £3656.37. This leaves a shortfall of £53.26. It was agreed that the Council would absorb the shortfall. Clerk requested to write to Ian Haward to request work to be carried out.

Clerk

Clerk to investigate if VAT can be recovered.

Clerk

Mr Browne also raised the matter of ongoing maintenance and is looking at annual contracts. It was agreed that Council would pay for the maintenance.

15. The following payments were approved

E-on Energy-Street Lights- Direct Debit	£45.50
CALC-Annual subscription- Cheque Serial No.102051	£508.89
CPRE-Annual Subscription- Cheque Serial No.102052	£25.00
Hire or Buy Ltd- Hire of Mower- Cheque Serial No.102053	£27.26
Eaton Tractors Ltd- oil- Cheque Serial No.102054	£18.86
Money Matters(St.Ives)Ltd- Internal Audit 22/04/05 Cheque Serial No.102055	£33.75
MJA Roofing Contractors-Repair bus shelter roof Gordon Road- Cheque Serial No.102056	£52.87
J Gellatly-Frosts Brampton Gardening Competition prizes- Cheque Serial No.102057	£35.00
J.Gellatly- A.Freeman Engraving Trophy- Cheque Serial No.102058	£5.95
J.Gellatly-Clerk Salary/Expenses April 05- Cheque Serial No.102059	£736.52
P.Stentiford- Groundsman Salary/Expenses April 2005- Cheque Serial No.102060	£314.96
Inland Revenue-PAYE/NI -April 2005- Cheque Serial No.102061	£185.95
Zurich Municipal-Annual Insurance premium- Cheque Serial No.102063	£3270.14

Clerk

Letter to Barclays Bank for £8000 Inter Account Transfer.
 Letter to Barclays Bank requested release of Title Deeds.

16. Correspondence Received

- (a) CALC training courses-Approved nomination of Clerk on the Archiving Parish Council Papers course £40 on 3rd September 2005
- (b) CALC District meetings-information only
- (c) Cambridgeshire Constabulary-meeting about PCSOs.Cllr E Timms agreed to attend on Tuesday 31st May 2005.
- (d) NSPCC Donation request-not proceeded with
- (e) Peter Hagger Donation request for new Introduction to village booklet. Cllr M Ross suggested that Mr Peter Hagger works together with Village Newsletter Committee. Extra costs may arise and it was suggested that a budget/costings be produced.
- (f) HDC Street Nameplates- see Item 12(f)
- (g) HDC Flood Forum-Cllr J Willcock to be Parish Representative
- (h) HDC Access to information-Clerk to ascertain more information
- (i) Girlguiding Thank you letter-information only
- (j) Trafalgar Weekend-Agenda Item for next meetng

Clerk

Cllr E
 Timms
 Clerk
 Cllr M
 Ross

Cllr
 Willcock
 Clerk

Clerk

Clerk

17. County Councillor Robert Clarke in his report suggested that the new District and County Councillors are given their slot at the beginning of the Council meeting with a time limit say 10 minutes. Agreed.

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk was requested to write to the new District and County Councillors to invite them to Council meetings. Agreed.
 Cllr Clarke suggested that Parish Council contact HDC and County Council to enquire about planting floral arrangements as an attractive entrance to the village from the A1 road. Clerk to contact Richard Kingston, Cambridge County Council for advise and costings.
 Cllr Clarke that the Parish Council follows up Flooding issues at Mill Lane with the new District & County Councillors.

- 18. Date of Finance meeting 12th May 2005-rescheduled to 2nd June 7pm
- Date of Planning meeting 19th May 2005
- Date of Amenities meeting 26th May 2005

Meeting closed 9.40pm


 SignedChairman

LITTLE PAXTON PARISH COUNCIL.

(Clerk of the Council. Mrs J.Gellatly, 11 Hayling Avenue, Little Paxton. St Neots. PE19 6HG)
(Telephone. 01480 470193) (e-mail. littlepaxton@hotmail.com)

Minutes of the Full Council meeting held in the Committee Room in Little Paxton Village Hall on Thursday 2nd June 2005.

Present: Cllrs A. Denison, E. Timms, R. Russell, J. Willcock, A. Hunt, M. Ross, F. Owens, J. Blackburn, P. Martin, M. Creed, County Cllr D. Harty, District Cllr K. Churchill and the Clerk J. Gellatly.

Agenda Item

Power Action

22. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. P. Harris (Holiday), County Cllr Lee (Holiday).

23. Report from District/County Councillors.

Cllr Harty gave a brief introduction and will support and help the Parish Council in its work.

Cllr Sharon Lee provided a short emailed report which was read out by the Clerk.

Cllr Churchill gave a brief introduction and advised that he is concerned about the Bydand Lane development and Development Control Panel has recommended outline planning permission to the Full Cabinet. Cllr Churchill also reported that with regards to the Core Strategy Consultation he supports the Parish Council's view that Little Paxton should be considered Key Centre for Limited Growth. Cllr Churchill reported that he is keen to get involved with the Parish Plan and willing to assist in the PARC project. There has been an issue with a resident in the High Street with regards to footballs being kicked over the Scout Hut and landing in the resident's garden. Meeting with resident to be arranged to discuss.

Cllr
Churchill
Clerk

24. The Minutes of Annual Parish meeting dated 22nd April 2005 were amended on page 4 PARC Project to include Hilton. The minutes were approved and signed.

25. Matters arising from Minutes of Annual Parish meeting. Kevin James, HDC Community Fire Safety Officer to be contacted regarding Fire Home Risk Assessments.

Clerk

26. The Minutes of the Special meeting dated 12th May 2005 were approved and signed.

27. The Minutes of meeting dated 4th May were approved and signed.

28. Matters arising from previous Minutes. Clerk has investigated VAT recovery in connection with Village Clock repairs and advised that as we do not have an insurable interest and do not own the Clock, the Council is unable to reclaim any VAT paid.

29. Members' declaration of Interest for items on the Agenda.

Cllr John Blackburn personal interest Agenda Item 38

30. Good Housekeeping

- (i) Clerk reminded Councillors to advise apologies for absence and that the reason is to be minuted.

- (ii) Clerk to advise each month what items of circulating correspondence is still circulating. All non urgent correspondence to be placed in folder and made available for perusal at each Full Council meeting. Clerk
- (iii) All Councillors to be provided with an up to date E mail list. Clerk

- 31. Parish Council Vacancies. There are at present 4 Vacancies on the Council. Clerk to place vacancy notices on Notice Boards week commencing 4th July to coincide with article in Village Newsletter. Clerk
- 32. Designing and setting up a Parish Council Website. It was agreed to consider setting up a Parish website to enable all Little Paxton groups and organisations to contribute their details. Agenda item for next meeting. Clerk to investigate. Clerk

- 34. Parish Plan. It was agreed to set up a Steering Group to look into starting a Parish Plan. Cllr E.Timms and Cllr M.Creed to co-ordinate. Clerk has received a letter from Mr. David Jones who wishes to join the Steering Group as the IT Co-ordinator. Further article re Parish Plans to be printed in Village Newsletter. Cllr Timms
Cllr Creed
- 34. Bottle Banks- Item to placed on next meeting's Agenda Clerk

- 35. Planning Committee Report. (see minutes of meeting held 19th May 2005) Clerk
 - (i) Application 0501195 Ful 21 Jubilee Close, Little Paxton. Extensions and alterations to dwelling Applicant Mr & Mrs Matheson. Approved. It was agreed that the planning application would have no detrimental impact on either the area or neighbouring properties.
 - (ii) Application 0501565 Ful 6 Dial Close, Little Paxton. Erection of garage. Applicant Mr & Mrs Grabowski.Approved. It was agreed that the planning application would have no detrimental impact on either the area or neighbouring properties. Clerk
 - (iii) 403101OUT Land off Bydand Lane. Correspondence regarding the Development Control meeting was forwarded to Great Paxton Parish Council by HDC in error. Consequently, no opportunity to discuss and advise our comments. Formal letter of complaint to be issued to HDC. Also request to HDC to ascertain what is available under the 106 agreement. Clerk

- 36. Finance & General Committee Report. None.
- 37. Amenities Report- (see minutes of meeting 26th May 2005)Rospa to be contacted re Playground Annual Inspection. Cllr F.Owens to arrange meeting with Allotment holders Clerk
Cllr Owens
- (a) Fencing on the playing field. Clerk to contact HDC Legal & Estates requesting further advice. All Cllrs & Clerk
- (b) Litter in village. Clerk issued pro forma to each Councillor so that each street in village is checked for amount of litter and to see if any street name plates need repair. Pro formas to be returned at next Full Council meeting Cllr P
- (c) Dog handling classes on Playing field. Site visit to playing field on Tuesday 7th June to see if dog handling classes have ceased. Follow Clerk

up letter to be issued if required.

38. Doctors Surgery- Cllr John Blackburn to reported that PCT have written to all patients advising that Surgery will remain open. SOS plan to meet with the PCT next week. Steering group will be required to be set up.

It was agreed to write to PCT emphasising our need to be involved with all aspects of the new Surgery in particular setting up the tender document and ensuring that there is a clear transparent objectives in the selection process. It is essential that the Parish Council is on the selection board/panel.

Cllr
Denison
& Clerk

Letter from SOS thanking the Parish Council for its help and support throughout the campaign.

SOS are having a Party in the Park on the 1st July and permission is requested to place a marquee on the playing field. Approved.

39. To approve payment of outstanding accounts

Clerk

BT Direct Debit -Council Phones *1	207.09
E-on Energy- Street Lights May 2005- Direct Debit	45.50
E-on Energy- Street Lights June 2004*2-Direct Debit	45.50
Hire or Buy group Ltd- Equipment Hire-chq no 102064	102.93
ESPO- Health & Safety items-chq no. 102065	50.15
CALC- Archive Workshop for Clerk-chq no.102066	40.00
HSE Books- Accident Book- chq no. 102068	5.58
Arthur Ibbett Ltd-maintenance materials-chq no. 102069	12.40
J.Gellatly-Clerk Salary/Expenses May 05-chq no. 102070	737.91
P.Stentiford- Groundsman Salary/Expenses May 2005 chq no 102071	352.47
Inland Revenue-NI -May 2005-chq no. 102072	65.31
S137 Donation -Little Paxton Football Club -Min 291- chq no. 102073	150.00
S137 Donation- St.James Church- Min291-chq no. 102074	800.00
S137 Donation - Paxfest- Min291- chq no. 102075	150.00
Anglian Water Direct debit- Water charges allotments	24.24
Bank of Scotland- lodgement to open new account chq no. 102076	1000.00

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*1 Bill in dispute. BT have charged a one off charge £115 which they cannot explain. Clerk to follow up.

Clerk

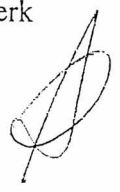
40. Correspondence Received

- (a) Trafalgar Weekend- Clerk to liase with John Browne to ascertain when clock will re installed into church. Item to be place on next months Agenda.
- (b) Little Paxton Gardening Club- Permission agreed to park camper van behind village hall on Paxfest 16 July 2005.
- (c) Paxfest meeting- Wednesday 22June 2005 Village Hall 7.45pma
- (d) Changes to Local Bus Services-information only

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk




- (e) CALC AGM Information only. CALC course on Charity Trustee & the Law.
Cllr John Blackburn agreed to attend.
- (f) Vitalise Donation request- unable to assist.
- (g) Zurich Municipal Health & Safety Seminar-information only.
- (h) Letter of apology from Cllr.A.Hunt

42. Date of Planning meeting 16th June 2005
Date of Full Council Planning meeting 7th July 2005

Meeting closed 9.40pm

Signed



Chairman

Power

1. Local Government Act 1972 Section 137

outstanding.

49. Designing and setting up a Parish Council Website. Cllr P Martin has purchased for the Council ,at a price of £6.90, the website domain littlepaxton.org.uk. Clerk has contacted CALC for advice on website set up and they advised to contact them again at the end of July. Agenda item for next meeting.

Clerk

50. Bottle Banks-Item to be placed on Agenda for next meeting.

Clerk

51. Litter and Street surveys to be completed by 1st September 2005. Agenda item for next meeting.

Clerk

52. Welcome to Little Paxton newsletter- Cllr M.Ross reported that a Welcome to Little Paxton newsletter has been completed by Peter Hagger. A few minor amendments required. Cllr Ross to invite Mr.Hagger to next newsletter meeting to discuss. Invoice to Bloor Homes for £65 approved.

Cllr Ross

Cllr Ross

Clerk

Clerk

53. Contract of Employment for the Clerk requires to be updated in line with model Contract drawn up by NALC. Agenda item for next meeting.

54. Village Hall- Cllr J.Blackburn to reported that he was concerned with the outside appearance of the village hall in particular the flaking paint on doorframes, doors and windows. Clerk requested to contact Village Hall Committee to request a copy of their maintenance plan and budget requirements .Cllr Harris who is a member of the Village Hall Committee to also raise the issue at their next meeting.

Clerk

Cllr Harris

Concern raised also about the effectiveness of the current CCTV system. Clerk requested to contact PC Russell Simpson for advise as to what CCTV system would be more appropriate.

Clerk

55. Mr.Brian Ogden HDC Arboricultural Officer gave a discussion on Tree Preservation Orders and Felling Certificates.He advised that he can supply an A3 map with all the TPO's highlighted.A Tree Preservation Order can only be issued when a tree is under threat, is considered a point of beauty or for public benefit. A TPO can cover one tree or an area of trees. If a tree with a TPO has to be removed due to decay then a tree should be planted in its place and this will be covered by the original TPO.HDC try to promote good tree care in the area. A tree is defined as a woody species with a single stem.

Clerk

Clerk to request copy of A3 map.

56. Planning Committee Report. (see minutes of meeting held 16th June 2005)

Delete sentence on Item 19 'It was agreed that...on the Parish Council's behalf'.

Clerk

(i) Application 050194FUL Glenmore, Hayling Walk, Little Paxton. Erection of triple garage. Applicant Mr & Mrs Levitt. Approved. It was agreed that the planning application would have no detrimental impact on either the area or neighbouring properties.

Clerk

(ii) Application 0501931FUL North Lodge, Little Paxton, Lane, Little Paxton. Applicant. Mr. Rayner. Approved. It was agreed that the planning application would have no detrimental impact on either the area or neighbouring properties.

Clerk

(iii) Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework. Further documentation has now been received. Our previous comments

- (iv) have not been noted. Clerk requested to chase for a reply. Agenda Item for Planning meeting.
- (v) Residential Development Land off Bydand Lane. Awaiting further information regarding Development Control Panel meeting 25 July 2005.
- (vi) Little Paxton Pre-School new building. Matter to be referred to Cllr Harty.
- (vii) Clerk requested to contact HDC requesting criteria for listed buildings. Particular concern over the three Lodges.

Clerk

Cllr
Harty/Clerk

Clerk

57. Finance & General Committee Report (see minutes 2nd June 2005). The minutes were approved and signed.

58. Amenities Report- (see minutes of meeting 26th May 2005). The minutes were approved and signed.

- (i) ROSPA report 2005. A quotation has been requested to repair gates. Clerk to ensure playground checked weekly. With regards to various safety surfacing, repairs temporary on hold until new site for Doctors Surgery agreed.
- (ii) Playing field Gate Licensing-HDC have provided a style of Licence to be issued annually to residents who have a gate which opens onto the playing field. Agenda Item for next meeting.
- (iii) Allotments Holders meeting- Cllr F Owens gave a brief report and requested Item to be placed on next Amenities agenda.
- (iv) Cemetery-Clerk raised concern over the condition of burial plots and is to provide funeral directors with specification for grave diggers. Clerk to request from Funeral Directors copy of safe practices of work.
- (v) PARC Project Agreement. Agenda Item for Finance meeting.

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk

59. Doctors Surgery- Cllr John Blackburn reported they have established a good relationship with PCT and are now moving forward with new building project. Both the playground and The Rookery are acceptable sites. Awaiting response from HDC over securing the land at The Rookery and Clerk requested to chase. The aim is to apply for outline planning permission for both sites.

Clerk

With regards to the project group, it was agreed that Cllr Denison and Cllr Willcock to represent the Parish Council, Cllr Blackburn and Peter Hagger to represent S.O.S. At future meetings of the project group a chairman will be appointed.

60. To approve payment of outstanding accounts

perusal.

- (g) Huntingdonshire District Guide 2005/2006-Information only
- (h) Huntingdonshire PCT AGM-Tuesday 20th September 2005.Information only.
- (i) BT proposals to realign payphone provision-Clerk requested to object to proposed changes.
- (j) Paxfest Thank you letter
- (k) CCC Changes to mobile library route-proposed changes to Monday 10.20am-10.40am acceptable.

Clerk

Clerk

63. Date of Finance meeting 14th July 2005
 Date of Planning meeting 21st July 2005 & 18th August 2005
 Date of Full Council 1st September 2005

64.Matters Arising- Fence on playing field 9.50pm.

Cllr A Denison read out


'That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw'.

It was proposed by Cllr Harris that a letters are issued to the residents that have objected to the fence advising that as there are uncertainties as to the exact position of the boundary line, the Council does not wish to incur unnecessary possible costs to the village. Seconded Cllr Blackburn.

At 10.35pm Press and Public invited to return to the meeting.

Meeting closed 10.37 pm

Signed

 Chairman

Power

1. Local Government Act 1972 Section 137

A confidential report of Agenda Item 64 is held with the Parish Clerk

Zurich Municipal-Laptop & Fidelity Insurance -chq no. 010001	44.24
Rospa- Playground Inspection-chq no. 010002	223.25
Drayton Electronic Services-PAT testing-chq no.010003	58.75
ESPO-Fire Extinguishers-chq no.010004	41.13
IRS Ltd- Signage-chq no.010005	27.87
CCVYS-Parc Project-chq no.010006	1700.00
CALC- Audit manual inserts/vacancy posters-chq no 010007.	13.74
CALC- Charity/Trustee workshop-chq no.010008	40.00
Hire or Buy Group Ltd- Equipment hire- chq no010009	168.69
Arthur Ibbett Ltd- Maintenance materials- chq no010010	87.50
Eaton Tractors Ltd- oil- chq no010011	21.15
St.Neots Museum-Free entry admission 2005/2006-S137 chq no.010012	165.00
Little Paxton Post Office Contribution July -S137- chq no.010013	250.00
Cllr P.Martin-Purchase website domain(awaiting invoice no cheque issued)	6.90
J.Gellatly-First Aid Manual (Ottakars)- chq no.010014	11.99
J.Gellatly-Clerk Salary/Expenses June 2005- chq no.010015	737.20
P.Stentiford- Groundsman Salary/Expenses June 2005- chq no.010016	449.64
Inland Revenue PAYE/NI- chq no.010017	143.72
Inmac-Laptop & Accessories & Warranty- chq no.10018	983.30
Express Printing- July newsletter S137- chq no.010020	229.90
Haward Horological Ltd- Clock repairs-chq no.100020	3276.84
Mr John Brown- Balance of Jubilee funds for clock-chq no. 010021	326.27

*1

*1

*1

Clerk

Bill in dispute. BT have charged a one off charge £115 which they cannot explain. They are currently investigating matter.Clerk requested to chase.

61.It was agreed that Cllr Denison & Cllr Timms to have delegated powers to sign cheques for invoices and salaries for August as there will be no Full Council meeting.

Cllr
Denison &
Cllr Timms

62. Correspondence Received

- (a) Luminus LP Street Warden-Clerk requested to contact the Street Warden for further information and arrange a meeting for say October 2005.
- (b) Huntingdonshire Football Association Lit- Goal Post Safety Scheme-Information only.
- (c) CCC 106 Agreement Land at Pitt Farm-Information only
- (d) DEFRA Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act 2005- Information only.
- (e) CCC Huntingdonshire Traffic Management Area Joint Committee- Information only.
- (f) Papworth Hospital Consultation Document-Documents issued for

Clerk



LITTLE PAXTON PARISH COUNCIL.

(Clerk of the Council: Mrs J.Gellatly, 11 Hayling Avenue, Little Paxton, St Neots. PE19 6HG)
(Telephone: 01480 470193) (e-mail: littlepaxton@hotmail.com)

Minutes of the Full Council meeting held in the Committee Room in Little Paxton Village Hall on Thursday 7th July 2nd 2005.

Present: Cllrs A. Denison, E. Timms, J. Willcock, M. Ross, F. Owens, J. Blackburn, M. Creed, P. Harris, and the Clerk J. Gellatly.

Agenda Item

Power Action

64. Matters Arising- Fence on playing field 9.50pm

Cllr A Denison read out

'That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw'.


Cllr Denison reported that he and the Clerk had an informal meeting with Mr. Dring, 31 Lakefield Avenue, Little Paxton. Mr Dring is not trying to gain extra land and recognises fence is on Parish land. *

It was proposed by Cllr Harris that letters are issued to the residents that have objected to the fence advising that as there are uncertainties as to the exact position of the boundary line, the Council does not wish to incur unnecessary possible costs to the village. Seconded Cllr Blackburn. Approved.

Improving hedging and greenery around the playing field to be discussed as a separate issue at a later date.

At 10.35pm Press and Public invited to return to the meeting.

Signed

 Chairman

Mr D A Dring
31 Lakefield Avenue
Little Paxton
St Neots
Cambs
PE19 6NZ

4 May 2006

Dear Mr & Mrs Dean,

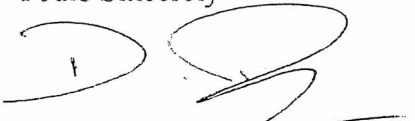
With further reference to your letter, which I have to say considering the content of your correspondence with the parish council with over the last 12 months, I read with considerable amusement!

To ensure that there is no misunderstanding with our scribbled note we do not accept that the fence post is positioned on your property, and therefore do not give you permission to take ownership.

However we have always tried to be good neighbours and are therefore more than happy for you to utilise our post if it is of assistance when you erect you new fence.

We have on this occasion resisted the temptation to call on you in person to discuss this issue. It is however our intention to discuss any future issues in person so that they can be addressed in a more mature manner.

Yours Sincerely



David Dring & Beverley Dring.

Copy To

Jennifer Gellatly (Parish Clerk)
11 Hayling Avenue
Little Paxton
St Neots
Cambs
PE19 6HG

Little Paxton Parish Council

Ref: LetDean100506

10th May 2006

Mrs S Dean
29 Lakefield Avenue
Little Paxton
PE19 6NZ

Dear Mrs Dean

Thank you for your letter of the 4th May regarding the Data Protection Act 1998.

I would like to refer you to our letter dated 22nd July 2005 and reiterate that all Parish Council documents, whether received by the Parish Council or issued by the Parish Council are public documents and are in the Public domain.

Furthermore, they are also available for public scrutiny under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

However, the Parish Council has not received any requests from Mr. & Mrs Dring to view any correspondence and to that end; no information has been released by the Parish Council.

I trust this satisfies your enquiry.

Yours sincerely,


Mrs Jennifer Gellatly
Parish Clerk

Little Paxton Parish Council

Ref: LetDean230506

23rd May 2006

Mrs S Dean
29 Lakefield Avenue
Little Paxton
PE19 6NZ

Dear Mrs Dean

Thank you for your letter of the 15th May requesting copies of correspondence and now enclose the following copy letters:

12/01/06 Letter to Mr Dring with Risk Assessment
14/01/06 Reply from Mr. Dring
16/01/06 Reply from Mr. Dring

There is no written correspondence from Huntingdonshire District Council

I wish to reiterate again that Mr & Mrs Dring have not requested copies of any correspondence and none has been issued or divulged from the Parish Office.

I trust this satisfies your enquiry.

Yours sincerely,


Mrs Jennifer Gellatly
Parish Clerk

29 Lakefield Avenue
Little Paxton
Huntingdon
Cambs
PE19 6NZ

Ms C Deller
Democratic Services Manager
Administration Division
Huntingdonshire District Council
Pathfinder House
St Mary's Street
Huntingdon
Cambs
PE29 3BR

16th November 2006

Dear Ms Deller

Thank you for your report, which I received on the 8th November 2006. I am however disappointed with much of the content of the report. I have detailed below the main points of dispute but would appreciate a meeting with you prior to your report being finalised.

1. My letter of the 4th May 2005 was circulated to all members of the Parish Council. However the question raised and by whom was not discussed. The item in question was already an agenda item. I was also at this meeting and know for a fact that neither my letter or my name was read out at the meeting, therefore nobody other than the Council members were aware of the content or the writer of the letter.
2. By Cllr Willcock own admission he has acknowledged that he has been in contact with Mr Dring in the past over Parish Council business, so discussing Parish Council business is obviously not uncommon between the two parties. I find it extraordinary that **both** Cllr Willcock and Mr Dring use the word "acquaintance" when describing their friendship. Furthermore if they are only acquaintances how is it that Mr Drings youngest son of approximately 10/11 years of age has been seen to run to greet Cllr Willcock and his wife when they have visited the house?
3. I can never recall seeing Cllr Willcock and Mr Dring "chatting" outside Mr Drings house. Whenever Cllr Willcock and his wife have visited Mr Dring they have walked straight around the back of Mr Drings property. Furthermore in Cllr Willcocks statement that he "chatted" to Mr Dring while en route to a close friend that lives at No 27 is ludicrous, Cllr Willcock would have to pass his friends house at No 27 in order to get to Mr Drings house. **(See attached plan of house positions). Hardly en route!**

4. Cllr Willcock states that he had not participated in any site meetings with the Drings or us and yet when asked about his relationship with Mr Dring Cllr Willcock has admitted that he visited the Drings on one occasion to inspect the position of the fence! Was he visiting in his capacity as Councillor or friend?
5. The Parish Clerk, Chairman of the Parish Council and Cllr Willcock have all indicated that Cllr Willcocks involvement had not influenced any decision made by them however, both have admitted that Cllr Willcock contribution to the meeting held on the 7th July 2005 was "confined to advice about the consequences of a decision for the Parish Council". It is usual that if someone's "advice" is sought or offered people tend to take note of that advice.
6. I reiterate again that the subject matter of the letter given to the Parish Council was not read out at the meeting held on the 4th May 2005 nor were it's contents discussed. The letter was handed to the Councillors present who read the letter and then proceeded to discuss possible ways of resolving the problem. There is no way anybody in the public gallery would have had knowledge of the contents of the letter or my personal concerns.
7. The public cannot access correspondence from a parishioner to the Parish Council unless they approach the Parish Clerk by formal request. It is the correspondence that Cllr Willcock has had access to in his capacity as a Councillor that I believe has been "shared" possibly verbally with the Drings. I have never suggested that Cllr Willcock had obtained the information illegally.
8. Mr Dring states in his e-mail dated the 29th September 2006 to the Investigating Officer that the parish council had forwarded copies of responses sent by myself to them to Mr Dring and that is how he became aware of the ongoing correspondence between the Parish Council and myself. Furthermore diary references produced by the Parish Clerk indicate that Mr Dring had been involved in an exchange of correspondence with the Parish Council to inform him of the outstanding dispute with myself. On the 15th May 2006 (**See attached letter**) I wrote a letter to the Parish Clerk requesting sight of all correspondence between the Parish Council, Huntingdon District Council and Mr Dring under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I was sent a copy of a letter dated 12th January 2006 to Mr Dring with regard to a Risk Assessment; a copy of the reply from Mr Dring dated 14th January 2006 and a copy of a letter dated 16th January 2006 from Mr Dring. Is the Clerk suggesting that there was more correspondence to and from the Drings that she declined to forward under my request? Furthermore if the clerk knew that the parish council had forwarded all my correspondence to Mr Dring (as stated in his e-mail to the Investigating Officer dated the 29th September 2006) why when I challenged the clerk on two separate occasions as to how Mr Dring had had sight of this information did she not advise me that the parish council had sent copies of my correspondence to him (**See attached letters**)

9. In the report both the Parish Chairman and the Parish Clerk state that they were aware of the exact nature of Cllr Willcocks relationship with the Drings. How can they independently verify his relationship to Mr Dring as the information they have on this matter is likely to be based on what Cllr Willcock has told them **after** the commencement of the investigation. After all upon joining the council you are not required to inform anyone about relationships you may or may not have with other villagers.

I was disappointed that I was not informed of your contact with Mr Dring. I believe that Mr Drings friendship with Cllr Willcock would influence the reliability of his responses. Had I been made aware of your contact with Mr Dring I would have produced an independent witness to substantiate my claim that Cllr Willcock and Mr Dring are more than acquaintances.

I look forward to hearing from you very soon with regard to arranging a mutually agreeable date for a meeting.

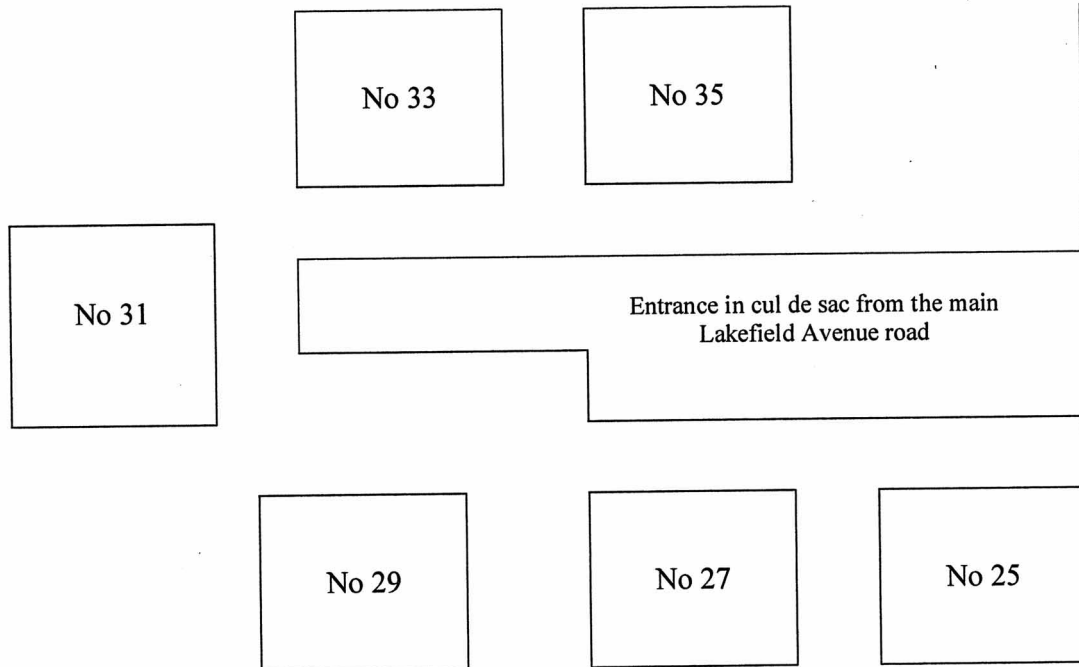
Yours sincerely



Mrs S Dean

See point 3

LAKEFIELD AVENUE NO.s 25 – 35



As you can see from the above layout of the houses in the cul de sac, there is no way that Cllr Willcock can pass Mr Drings (Number 31) house whilst en route to visiting his "close" friend at number 27

Point 8

Little Paxton Parish Council

Ref: LetDean100506

10th May 2006

Mrs S Dean
29 Lakefield Avenue
Little Paxton
PE19 6NZ

Dear Mrs Dean

Thank you for your letter of the 4th May regarding the Data Protection Act 1998.

I would like to refer you to our letter dated 22nd July 2005 and reiterate that all Parish Council documents, whether received by the Parish Council or issued by the Parish Council are public documents and are in the Public domain.

Furthermore, they are also available for public scrutiny under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

However, the Parish Council has not received any requests from Mr. & Mrs Dring to view any correspondence and to that end, no information has been released by the Parish Council.

I trust this satisfies your enquiry.

Yours sincerely,


Mrs Jennifer Gellatly
Parish Clerk

Parish Clerk: Mrs J. Gellatly (MCIBS, Chartered Banker), 11 Hayling Avenue,
Little Paxton, St Neots, Cambs PE19 6HG
Telephone: 01480 470193 e-mail: littlepaxton@hotmail.com

Point 8

29 Lakefield Avenue
Little Paxton
Huntingdon
Cambs
PE19 6NZ

Mrs J Gellatly
Parish Clerk
11 Hayling Avenue
Little Paxton
Huntingdon
Cambs
PE19 6HG

15th May 2006

Dear Mrs Gellatly

Thank you for your letter dated 10th May 2006 outlining the Parish Councils rules on the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

As you confirm in your letter dated the 10th May 2006 that you have received no official application from Mr & Mrs Dring to obtain access to any correspondence between ourselves and the Parish Council (and I am not in any way suggesting that the Parish Council have operated inappropriately) you can understand my concern at Mr & Mrs Drings comments in their letter to us dated 4th May 2006 a copy of which was sent to you in your capacity as Parish Clerk regarding the content of our correspondence to the Parish Council over the last 12 months. This being the case perhaps you would be so kind as to comment as to how they could have gained access to Parish Council documents without going through the normal channels.

Furthermore I would like to make an official request to have access to all documents and correspondence between the Parish Council, Mr & Mrs During and Huntingdonshire District Council relating to the boundary fence.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Dean

Point 8

Little Paxton Parish Council

Ref: LetDean230506

23rd May 2006

Mrs S Dean
29 Lakefield Avenue
Little Paxton
PE19 6NZ

Dear Mrs Dean

Thank you for your letter of the 15th May requesting copies of correspondence and now enclose the following copy letters:

12/01/06 Letter to Mr Dring with Risk Assessment

14/01/06 Reply from Mr. Dring


16/01/06 Reply from Mr. Dring

There is no written correspondence from Huntingdonshire District Council

I wish to reiterate again that Mr & Mrs Dring have not requested copies of any correspondence and none has been issued or divulged from the Parish Office.

I trust this satisfies your enquiry.

Yours sincerely,


Mrs Jennifer Gellatly
Parish Clerk

Parish Clerk: Mrs J. Gellatly (MCIBS, Chartered Banker), 11 Hayling Avenue,
Little Paxton, St Neots, Cambs PE19 6HG
Telephone: 01480 470193 e-mail: littlepaxton@hotmail.com

CONFIDENTIAL

Notes of an interview held between Christine Deller, Investigating Officer and Mrs Jenny Gellatly, Clerk to Little Paxton Parish Council on 29th September 2006 commencing at 10.30 am.

1. The Investigating Officer explained the investigation process following the referral of a complaint from the Standards Board for England against a Councillor serving on Little Paxton Parish Council and the proposed format of the interview adding that questions to Mrs Gellatly would largely be directed towards establishing facts and that the formalities with regard to the Code of Conduct had been complied with.

The Investigating Officer also confirmed the areas of the Code alleged to have been breached and the timescale to which the Investigator was working. The Investigating Officer explained that notes of the interview would be taken and that Mrs Gellatly would receive a copy of these to verify as an accurate record.

2. Mrs Gellatly confirmed that Little Paxton Parish Council had resolved to adopt the model code of conduct on 7th May 2002 and that Councillor J Willcock had agreed to abide by the Code in his declaration of acceptance of office. Mrs Gellatly was not aware that Councillor Willcock had received a copy of the code as this would have been dealt with by the previous Clerk.

3. Mrs Gellatly had no record that Councillor Willcock had received training on the Code of Conduct although he had received a copy of the "good councillors guide" published by NATIONAL TRAINING STRATEGY FOR TOWN - PARISH COUNCILS PUBLISHED BY THE COUNTRYSIDE AGENCY.

* ALL C.A.-L.C. TRAINING DATE) ARE ITEMISED UNDER 'CORRESPONDENCE'

Mrs Gellatly would have offered any available training opportunity via an item on the Agenda but Councillor Willcock had not expressed any interest in training at meetings. Mrs Gellatly described Councillor Willcock as a clever and astute person who made valid comments at Parish Council meetings and always had the Council's best interests at heart. It was Mrs Gellatly's view that Councillor Willcock understood the requirements of the code.

4. Mrs Gellatly confirmed that she had been Clerk of Little Paxton Parish Council for two years and had attended a number of courses offered by CALC including "basic clerk" instructions and health and safety. She was currently studying the requirements for establishing Little Paxton as a quality parish council.
5. Mrs Gellatly described the events leading to the submission of the complaint against Councillor Willcock. In March 2005, Mr Dring had asked the Parish Council for permission to erect a fence on the boundary of his garden at 31 Lakefield Avenue and that of the playing field. The Parish Council had no objections provided the new fence was in keeping with those already established. Work on Mr Dring's fence commenced on 12th April. A complaint was received from the owner of ~~28~~^{29 33} Lakefield Avenue, which suggested the fence was blocking her rear exit and that the concrete

posts supporting the fence had been established beyond rather than inside a hedgerow thus resulting in the fence being erected approximately 45 cm over the boundary of the playing field. Mrs Gellatly admitted that the Parish Council could not precisely identify the boundary. Mrs Gellatly, the Chairman of the Parish Council, Councillor A Denison and Councillor J Blackburn ^{and the} ~~who acted as~~ groundsman visited the site. - ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION

6. Mrs Gellatly reported that on 4th May 2005 the Parish Council received a letter from Mrs Dean about the fence. Copies of this letter were circulated at the Council meeting held in the evening. The Parish Council agreed to take legal advice on the situation from the District Council.

Mrs Gellatly confirmed that Councillor Willcock had been present at the meeting but had not declared an interest, that she had not found it necessary to advise him to do so, nor had he requested advice on the subject.

7. The item was discussed again at a Council meeting on 2nd June, 2005. The Council had received further advice from the District Council's Estates Officer. This had suggested four options to the Parish Council – that they do nothing, that they sell the strip of land in question to Mr Dring, that they issue a temporary licence or that they seek to remove the fence. The Council agreed to seek further advice from the District Council's Head of Legal and Estates. Mrs Gellatly confirmed that Councillor Willcock was present at the meeting but had not declared an interest.

8. Councillor Willcock was present in the meeting of the Council on 7th July 2005 when the item was discussed again. He did not declare an interest. The item was considered to be confidential business and was conducted in private session by the Parish Council. Bearing in mind the uncertainties regarding the boundary of the fence vis-à-vis adjoining houses and the existence of fences already on the same boundary, the Council decided to take no further action. Mrs Gellatly confirmed that Councillor Willcock had contributed to the debate and had advised that were legal action to be taken, the Parish Council's position was such that they might have to bear the burden of costs.
9. Mrs Gellatly admitted that if she had considered that Councillor Willcock had an interest, she would have raised this with him. Similarly, the Parish Council would have prompted him. They were "very good at that".
10. Regarding Councillor Willcock's relationship with Mr Dring, Mrs Gellately reported that Mr Dring had moved into Number 31 Lakefield Avenue in March 2005, some six weeks prior to the erection of the fence. Mrs Gellately considered that Councillor Willcock would have known of Mr Dring but she could not describe their relationship as a close. No other Councillors lived adjacent to the playing field so were affected by the complaint in terms of potential interests.
11. Mrs Gellatly reiterated that it was the Council and not the Finance Committee who had taken all the decisions on the fence. Mrs Gellatly believed that Councillor Willcock had not influenced the parish council and had only advised of the consequences for the Council should Mr Dring decide to take legal action.

12. In respect of the correspondence between the Parish Council and Mrs Dean, the content of all letters would have been shown to Councillors J Blackburn (Chairman of the Planning Committee) and A Denison (Chairman of the Parish Council) prior to their despatch. Councillor Willcock was aware of the correspondence and that it was ongoing but would not have been privy to the content of individual letters nor able to access them without Mrs Gellatly's knowledge.
13. Mrs Dean and Mrs Cleaver (Number 33) were present at the meeting of the Council held on 4th May when copies of Mrs Dean's letter had been circulated but not read out to the Council. The item was discussed so the issue regarding the fence over the boundary of the playing field would have been aired in public. There was a large public gallery at that meeting because the "save our surgery campaign" was on the same agenda.
14. Mrs Gellatly confirmed that Councillor Willcock would not have had access to the content of the Parish Council's correspondence with Mrs Dean other than by his attendance at meetings of the Parish Council when the content might have been discussed. Councillor Willcock had no involvement in the site visit.
15. Mrs Gellatly confirmed that Mr Dring had not asked for sight of Mrs Dean's correspondence under the Freedom of Information Act and she was firmly of the belief that Councillor Willcock had not had access to any correspondence which would have enabled him to have revealed their content to Mr Dring. Mrs Gellatly added that she believed that Mr Dring would not have been aware of any

correspondence other than his own and any addressed to him. Mrs Gellatly strongly reiterated that she did not release copies of Mrs Dean's correspondence to Mr Dring.

16. In conclusion, Mrs Gellatly stated that the Parish Council had taken advice at every stage and that, in her view, they could not have done any more to meet the requirements of both parties. She believed that there was no foundation to the complaint.
17. Mrs Gellatly wished to point out, that in her view, Mrs Dean has misunderstood the content of a letter from the Dring's dated 4th May 2006 which could be interpreted as saying that the Dring's had had access to Mrs Dean's correspondence over the past 12 months. Mrs Gellatly suggested that this was a misunderstanding on the part of Mrs Dean.

The interview concluded at 11.16 am.

Post Script: The Investigating Officer confirmed in a telephone call to Mrs Gellatly on 5th October 2006, that Councillor Willcock had abstained from voting at the meeting held on 7th July 2005, that no recorded vote had been taken at that meeting but that she had a record of the abstention in her hand written notes.

Signed *Jan Gellatly* ✓

Dated..... *11/10/06*

CONFIDENTIAL

Notes of an interview held between Christine Deller, Investigating Officer and Councillor J Willcock, Little Paxton Parish Council at Cranfield University on 4th October 2006 commencing at 2.15 pm.

1. Following introductions, the Investigating Officer explained the interview process, confirmed the allegations which had been made and the timescale to which the Investigating Officer was working. The Investigating Officer explained that notes of the interview would be taken and that Councillor Willcock would receive a copy of these to verify as an accurate record.
2. Councillor Willcock confirmed that he had been a Councillor for 4/5 years* and recalled making his declaration of acceptance of office and agreeing to abide by the Parish Council's Code of Conduct. This appears to be done annually at Little Paxton Parish Council. Whilst Councillor Willcock did not recall having received a copy of the Code of Conduct specifically he suggested that as the clerk prior to Mrs J Gellately was thorough and methodical, he would have been surprised if it had been overlooked.

Despite being offered the opportunity, Councillor Willcock admitted that he had never participated in any training on the Code of Conduct either offered by CALC or by the District Council and when asked why suggested that they had been held at a time inconvenient to him.

Councillor Willcock volunteered that his interests lay in the financial administration of the Parish Council and that he had not served on any Committee, other than the Parish Council's Finance Committee.

The Investigating Officer confirmed that Councillor Willcock had registered his financial and other interests with the Monitoring Officer at the District Council.

3. Councillor Willcock indicated that he understood the concept of a personal and prejudicial interest. Having been reminded that the question of the fence on the boundary of Mr and Mrs Dring's property and the playing field had arisen at three meetings of the Parish Council, Councillor Willcock confirmed that he had not declared an interest on any of these occasions and when asked why – Councillor Willcock considered that “it was not relevant”. Whilst his house abutted the playing field, it was still some distance away from the Dring's.
4. Councillor Willcock confirmed that neither the Clerk, Chairman or colleague Councillors had offered him advice in this respect nor had anyone suggested before/after the meeting(s) that it might have been prudent for Councillor Willcock to have declared an interest.
5. Councillor Willcock indicated that he contributed to debate on the item “fence on playing field” at a meeting of the Parish Council held on 7th July 2005. Councillor Willcock recalled that he was of the view that the information originally conveyed to the fence contractor had been ambiguous and un-clear and was an insufficient foundation on which to instruct Mr Dring to vary the position of his fence. Mr Willcock

also was concerned that the owners of 3/4 dwellings had similarly placed their rear garden fence on the same boundary and that it would have placed the Parish Council in a very difficult position, if they decided to pursue one owner and not others. Given the financial implications/risk that might result were Mr Dring to pursue a case against the Parish Council, his view that it would be an inappropriate use of the parish precept and the uncertainties that the Parish had about pursuing the matter, the Council had agreed not to take further action.

Councillor Willcock stated that he had not participated in the vote and had abstained. When it was pointed out that this had not been recorded in the Minutes, Councillor Willcock suggested that the Parish Clerk would recall his abstention.**

When asked if he influenced the meeting in making this decision, Councillor Willcock replied that he might have had "some influence" on this one occasion because he was mindful of the wider implications of the decision for the other dwellings abutting the field who had similarly erected fences on the boundary.

Councillor Willcock confirmed that the decision was one taken by the full parish council and not the Finance Committee which he chaired but which rarely met.

6. Councillor Willcock stated that he had never met Mrs Dring until after the complaint had been submitted. He had, however, had some contact with Mr Dring in the past. Mr Dring had lobbied him as parish councillor over a proposed planning application for a residential development close to his previous address at 14 Lakefield Avenue.

Councillor Willcock was not aware that Mr and Mrs Dring had moved to 31 Lakefield Avenue prior to the complaint having been submitted. Councillor Willcock had met Mr Dring once or twice at the gym where they had had a brief exchange – merely pleasantries.

Councillor Willcock visited Mr Dring once at his address at 31 Lakefield Avenue to deliver a copy of the statement he had sent to the Monitoring Officer in response to the complaint made against him. He thought it was courteous to do this. Councillor Willcock indicated that Mr Dring had never visited his home. Councillor Willcock had not visited Mr Dring on behalf of the parish council.

7. Councillor Willcock commented that he had deliberately kept “at arms length” with any involvement in the matter of the “fence on the playing field”. The assessment of the situation, discussions and meetings had been dealt with by the Parish Clerk, Chairman of the Council and the groundsman to the playing field. He had “deliberately kept out of discussions”. When asked why, he commented that Mrs Dean had a reputation for being difficult, so he wanted to “keep well away”. Councillor Willcock stated that he had not seen any correspondence which Mr and Mrs Dean may have written to the Parish Council other than that which may have been circulated to the Council meeting although he had no recall of this either. He denied passing on the contents of the correspondence from Mr and Mrs Dean to Mr and Mrs Dring.
8. Councillor Willcock denied that he had a friendship with Mr and Mrs Dring and suggested their relationship was merely a “very passing acquaintance”.

9. When asked if he had any further information, Councillor Willcock suggested that he wished to add that the complainant had a history of confrontation with the current and previous occupiers of number 31 Lakefield Avenue and that there had been a physical assault on Mr Dring to which the police had been called. Whilst this, as far as Councillor Willcock was aware, was not being pursued he believed Mrs Dean also was following up a complaint against the police. He regretted the disproportionate amount of time which already had been spent on the code of conduct case.
10. The Investigating officer concluded the interview at 2.55pm.

* To be confirmed by Clerk to Little Paxton

** To be confirmed by Clerk to Little Paxton

9. When asked if he had any further information, Councillor Willcock suggested that he wished to add that the complainant had a history of confrontation with the current and previous occupiers of number 31 Lakefield Avenue and that there had been a physical assault on Mr Dring to which the police had been called. Whilst this, as far as Councillor Willcock was aware, was not being pursued he believed Mrs Dean also was following up a complaint against the police. He regretted the disproportionate amount of time which already had been spent on the code of conduct case.
10. The Investigating officer concluded the interview at 2.55pm.

* To be confirmed by Clerk to Little Paxton

** To be confirmed by Clerk to Little Paxton

Signed 

Date 

CONFIDENTIAL

Notes of an interview held between Christine Deller, Investigating Officer and Councillor A Denison, Chairman of Little Paxton Parish Council held on 11th October 2006 commencing at 10.05am in the Chairman's Room, Pathfinder House, Huntingdon.

1. The Investigating Officer explained the investigation process following the referral of a complaint from the Standards Board for England against a Councillor serving on Little Paxton Parish Council.

The Investigating Officer explained that she had chosen to interview Councillor Denison given his position as Chairman of the Parish Council when the complaint arose, his presence at the meetings when the items regarding fence and playing field boundary had been discussed and his ability to act as a witness to the events surrounding the complaint.

The Investigating Officer also confirmed the areas of the code alleged to have breached and the timescale to which the Investigator was working. The Investigating Officer explained that



notes of the interview would be taken and that Councillor Denison would receive a copy of these to verify as an accurate record.

2. Councillor Denison described his involvement in the events leading to the complaint. The problem first came to light when a Councillor spotted a fencing contractor working on the boundary of Mr Drings property at 31 Lakefield Avenue and reported that concrete posts erected by the contractor were encroaching upon parish council land by approximately 18 inches. Councillor Denison admitted that the location of the boundary was debatable. The issue had subsequently been raised at various meetings of the Council. Councillor Denison got the impression that Mr Dring might have taken action against the Parish Council if he had been asked to remove the fence. Councillor Denison confirmed that the District Council's Estates Manager, Keith Phillips, had visited the site and given advice to the Parish Council.

Councillor Denison added that Mrs Dean had complained about the fence and sent various letters to the Parish Council. It had been agreed that the Clerk and Chairman of the Parish Council should meet with Mrs Dean to try to resolve the difficulties. Mrs Dean had been accompanied by her husband. The meeting was prolonged and not terribly productive but Councillor Denison hoped, at that time, that that would have been the end of the problem.

3. Councillor Denison suggested that the Parish Clerk was very good in reminding Councillors to declare their interests and if, in doubt, she would always err on the side of caution and ensure that interests were declared.
4. Councillor Denison could not recall that Councillor Willcock declared an interest in the fence/boundary issue at the three meetings at which the matter was raised. Neither the Clerk nor colleague Members had suggested to Councillor Willcock that he had an interest although Councillor Willcock made no secret of the fact that he knew Mr Dring.
5. Councillor Denison could not recall that Councillor Willcock had contributed anything beneficial to the meetings at which the issue of the fence/boundary had arisen. However, Councillor Willcock made no secret of the fact that he had had a difference of opinion with Mrs Dean and did not hold her in very high regard. Councillor Denison did not believe that Councillor Willcock influenced the Parish Council in its decision making. Councillor Denison recalled that Councillor Willcock abstained from voting at the meeting on 7th July 2005. Councillor Denison confirmed that the contents of Mrs Deans letter circulated to the Council at its meeting on 4th May 2005 had been apparent to all Councillors. He could not recall any specific discussion on the letter when it was first considered by the Parish Council.



6. Although he considered Councillor Willcock to be outspoken, Councillor Denison believed that he had a good understanding of the Code of Conduct.
7. Councillor Denison did not consider that Councillor Willcock had an interest as a resident of Lakefield Avenue nor as a neighbour because he had no view of Mr Drings rear boundary or fence. Councillor Denison had no evidence to suggest either way how much of a friend Councillor Willcock might be to Mr Dring.
8. Councillor Denison confirmed that Councillor Willcock had no involvement in any site meeting which might have been organised by the Clerk to resolve the fence issue. He had not personally discussed the matter with Councillor Willcock and had only been involved in discussions on the subject at meetings of the Parish Council or in liaison with the Parish Clerk.
9. Councillor Denison confirmed that he was not able to access correspondence received by the Parish Council and would only see that distributed to him formally as part of his role as Parish Councillor. Councillor Denison could not recall any conversations taking place outside Parish Council meetings on the fence between himself and Councillor Willcock although Councillor Willcock might have commented about Mrs Dean.

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10. In terms of the relationship between Mr Dring and Councillor Willcock, Councillor Denison suggested that they were casual friends as he believed both had an interest in cricket.
11. Councillor Denison was of the view that Councillor Willcock would have visited Mr Dring at home socially – certainly after the complaint had been made and on more than one occasion.
12. Councillor Denison was firmly of the belief that Councillor Willcock had not used his position to the advantage of the Drings and had no influence over the decision made by the Parish Council on the matter.
13. Councillor Denison could not envisage how Mr Dring would have had sight of correspondence from Mrs Dean and suggested that it was very unlikely that he had. Councillor Denison added that it was his view that no other Councillor would have had any interest in releasing correspondence to the Drings and, in any event, would have found it very difficult to do so. Councillor Denison confirmed his view that Councillor Willcock had formed a dislike of Mrs Dean and had deliberately kept away from the decision making process on the fence because of her involvement.

14. Councillor Denison re-iterated that Councillor Willcock tended to be outspoken, had let it be known that he did not think too highly of Mrs Dean and that he had casually referred to an association with Mr Dring at Parish Council meetings but had not formally registered an interest.

The interview concluded at 10.45am.

Signed.....

Den Denison

Date.....

14 October 2006

**CORRECTIONS/AMENDMENTS FROM INTERVIEW ON 12TH OCTOBER
2006**

1. Before the Parish Council meeting which took place on the 4th May 2005, I was not aware of who Cllr Willcock was or where he lived. It was when I was at the meeting and looked around at the Councillors present I remarked to the lady sitting next to me that there was only one person on the Council that I recognised because I had seen him visiting Mr & Mrs Dring on several occasions. It was she who told me who he was and where he lived.
2. During the meeting as neither the Chairman or the Clerk could understand our concerns regarding the "dog leg" effect the new boundary had caused it was agreed that members of the Parish Council would meet with Mr Dean at the "problem" area. This meeting confirmed the potential hazard and the Council agreed to arrange a visit from ROSPA
3. The findings of the ROSPA inspections confirmed the hazard and their proposed recommendations.
4. We were told at the meeting that Mr Dring had basically "threatened" the Parish Council that if they wanted their land back they would have to take him to Court. I believe Mr Dring made this threat because he knew that the Parish Council had limited funds and at the time the Parish Council were helping the SOS group financially to ensure that the village retained its Doctors surgery.
5. The reason this action was proposed by myself was to assist the Parish Council by removing the potential hazard, which had been caused by their original ineffectiveness by not dealing with the problem when they were first made aware of it. I have in no way gained by this action.
6. The hand written reply was from Mrs Dring not Mr Dring.
7. Cllr Willcock was at the rear of the property observing the boundary when he made his statement to Mr Dring.
8. Not only do I believe that the tone of the letter was smug and condescending I also believe that it was very much a "one up man ship" a kind of "we have friends in high places so watch it because we know all about you"!
9. It was not a case of Cllr Willcock not being close enough it was their opinion that the friendship would not affect his judgement.
10. I believe that Cllr Willcock is trying to suggest he is just an acquaintance of Mr Drings by deliberately avoiding being seen with them. This is noticeable by the way he visits another neighbour just 2 doors away but makes no attempt to visit the Drings. I also believe that once this investigation is over regardless of the outcome Cllr Willcock will resume his visits to the Drings house.

11. Unfortunately because the Parish Council "failed" to protect my rights as an individual I would now find it very difficult to approach them on any matter in the future for fear that it would not be treated fairly or even worse that a member of the Council would be divulging information with a third party.
12. I also believe the Chairman of the Parish Council to be beyond reproach.

CONFIDENTIAL

Notes of an interview held between Christine Deller, Investigating Officer and Mrs Susan Dean, held on 12th October 2006 commencing at 2.05 pm in the Chairman's Room, Pathfinder House, Huntingdon.

1. The Investigating Officer explained the investigation process following the referral to the District Council's Monitoring Officer of Mrs Dean's complaint from the Standards Board for England against a Councillor serving on Little Paxton Parish Council.

The Investigating Officer confirmed the areas of the Code alleged to have been breached and the timescale to which she was working. The Investigating Officer asked Mrs Dean for permission to tape the interview. No objection was raised by Mrs Dean. It was explained that notes of the interview would be taken and that Mrs Dean would receive a copy of these to verify as an accurate record.

2. Mrs Dean described the events leading to her decision to submit a complaint against Councillor Willcock. Mrs Dean referred to events commencing in May 2005 when her neighbour Mr Dring began to erect a new rear garden fence on the boundary of his dwelling and that of the playing field. It became apparent to Mrs Dean that the fence had been erected beyond the line of the boundary. Mrs Dean drew this situation to the attention of the Clerk to Little Paxton Parish Council. The Clerk acknowledged the Parish Council had been aware that work had commenced but not that the fence line had extended beyond the boundary. The Parish Clerk undertook to investigate. Having not heard any outcome, Mrs Dean made further enquiries of the Parish Clerk

who informed Mrs Dean that the matter would be discussed at the Parish Council meeting on 4th May. Mrs Dean attended the meeting and hoped to address the Parish Council.

When informed that she would not be able to speak, Mrs Dean sought advice from CALC who suggested that she submit her questions in writing for the attention of the Parish Council at that meeting. Mrs Dean wished to be informed why the Parish Council had not taken any action to stop the fencing contractor and how they were now going to proceed given that the fence had been erected. Mrs Dean was concerned that her neighbour had acquired fifteen square metres of prime Cambridgeshire playing field. The matter was raised at the meeting and Mrs Dean heard a series of options being discussed. Ex-Councillor R L Clarke addressed the meeting from the public gallery and suggested that the Parish Council needed to be careful to avoid setting a precedent and not to encourage other householders living on that boundary to follow suit. The Parish Council agreed to contact the Head of Legal Services at Huntingdonshire District Council for advice.

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After the meeting, Mrs Dean asked for a copy of the Minutes of 4th May. At this stage, Mrs Dean was aware that Councillor Willcock's own property abutted the playing field and she believed Councillor Willcock also to be a friend of her neighbour – Mr Dring whose fence was the subject of the Parish Council meeting. Mrs Dean expressed amazement that Councillor Willcock had not declared an interest in the item.

In a subsequent meeting with the Chairman of the Parish Council and Parish Clerk, Mrs Dean had drawn this omission to their attention. Both allegedly acknowledged that Councillor Willcock was a friend of Mr Dring and that they were aware that his property abutted the playing field. However, both were of the view that Councillor Willcock had not used his position to influence a decision. Mrs Dean was led to understand that the Parish Council would make it clear to those residents with dwellings on that same boundary that the Parish Council would not permit further fences to be erected beyond the boundary. (2)

Mrs Dean admitted that correspondence between herself and the Parish Council was prolonged and that this was in part due to the fact that she was also looking to erect a new rear garden fence. Reference was made to a location map of Lakefield Avenue and the local circumstances whereby there was, in effect, a double boundary – one for the house and one for the field. In the past, the householders had taken the land (or strip) which had resulted into their own garden. Because the Parish Council had not objected to the Dring's fence, Mrs Dean asserted that this had had an effect on her rear boundary by creating a dog leg effect. Mrs Dean also expressed concern at the potential hazard this has created for walkers and suggested that a risk assessment of the location be undertaken. Arrangements for this were undertaken by the Parish Council. (3)

Mrs Dean suggested that several meetings of the Parish Council had taken place in the meantime to discuss how to proceed on the fence issue. Mrs Dean requested copies of the minutes of these meetings. On each occasion that the item had been discussed, Councillor Willcock had failed to declare an interest. On the last occasion

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the item was discussed in private session. Mrs Dean understood that in making their final decision, the Parish Council had been mindful of the cost implications of any legal case Mr Dring might bring against the Council. The minutes do not reveal details of the vote. However, Mrs Dean understood that the vote on whether to request Mr Dring to remove his fence was very close. Mrs Dean also was aware that the financial constraints placed on the Parish Council had influenced this decision. Mrs Dean suggested that as Chairman of the Finance Committee, Councillor Willcock was "in charge of finances at Little Paxton Council". Mrs Dean alleged that she had been advised by the Chairman of Parish Council that Councillor Willcock had voted on this item and that it had been a "close call".

Mrs Dean reported that she had proceeded to make arrangements for her own fence to be erected and had contacted the Parish Clerk for permission for a tree surgeon to access her garden from the playing field and secondly to allow Mrs Dean to extend her boundary to meet that of her neighbour at one end and to taper it towards others at the other end of the fence. The Clerk and the Chairman of the Parish Council agreed to this course of action but suggested that they would confirm this at the next parish council meeting. Mrs Dean undertook to let the parish clerk know when work commenced and invited the parish council to inspect the work as and when they wished to ensure that it was being undertaken to their satisfaction.

Mrs Dean added that Mr Dring's post was within her new boundary. Mrs Dean had written to Mr Dring asking if he would like to remove his post because it would be enclosed when her new fence had been erected. Mrs Dean suggested that a handwritten note was returned to her by Mr Dring suggesting that Mrs Dean contact the

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Parish Council. Mrs Dean alleged that some four/five days later Mr Dring was speaking to Councillor Willcock outside of Mr Dring's house and that Councillor Willcock had said "wait and see what they do before you do anything". It was suggested that Mr Dean overheard this conversation. Then "out of the blue" a letter addressed to Mr and Mrs Dean dated 4th May 2006 arrived. This suggested that Mr Dring had seen correspondence between Mr and Mrs Dean and the Parish Council. Mrs Dean believed the first paragraph inferred that the Dring's had had sight of her correspondence with the Parish Council. Mrs Dean contacted the Clerk and asked if Mr Dring had requested, under the Freedom of Information Act, copies of any correspondence between the two parties over the past year. Mrs Dean was informed by the Parish Clerk that no such request had been made. This begged the question – "How had Mr Dring gained access to this correspondence ?" The Clerk confirmed that the correspondence had not been released from the Parish Office. Mrs Dean was hopeful that the Parish Council would have pursued it and suggested if they had done, she would not have found it necessary to complain to the Standards Board for England.

3. Mrs Dean reported that she had accessed the web site of the Standards Board to gain some information on interests. Mrs Dean said she had no objection to individuals legitimately accessing information via the Freedom of Information Act but she objected to anybody obtaining information via the "back door". Mrs Dean believed that her neighbour might not have acted in the way he did if he had not had access to her correspondence. Reference was made to the fact that Mr Dring had been cautioned for criminal damage, the Investigating Officer advised that this alleged offence was not material to the complaint so would not be examined. Mrs

Dean explained that the information to which Mr Dring had access had affected his behaviour and had a bearing on their relationship. Mrs Dean believed the tone of the letter to be smug and condescending. 8

Mrs Dean believed that the decision taken by the Parish Council affected Councillor Willcock personally and that his friendship with Mr Dring had affected his judgement of the facts presented on the fence/boundary item.

4. Regarding the first meeting at which the item had been raised and at which Mrs Dean had been present, Mrs Dean could not recall exactly what Councillor Willcock had said because it had been difficult to hear. However, she thought he suggested that he didn't want to get involved. Mrs Dean had subsequently asked for a copy of the Minutes to see what had been recorded. Subsequently, the Parish Clerk had confirmed that Councillor Willcock had not declared an interest nor challenged the minutes of the following meeting.
5. Regarding the letter from Mrs Dean which was presented to the Parish Council on 4th May 2005, Mrs Dean reported that it had been referred to during the meeting and that members of the council were asked to read it. A short discussion had ensued at which point former Councillor R L Clarke had interceded and recommended that the Council seek legal advice before setting any precedent. Mrs Dean did not suggest that Councillor Willcock's presence at this meeting influenced the conclusion reached by the Parish Council to refer the matter to the Head of Legal Services at the District Council.

6. When asked how Mrs Dean had drawn the conclusion that Councillor Willcock had influenced the decision making process, Mrs Dean reported that she and her husband had had a meeting with the Chairman of the parish council and parish clerk and that she had referred to the possibility that Councillor Willcock had had a prejudicial interest. Both the clerk and chairman acknowledged that Councillor Willcock was a friend of Mr Dring but not close enough to warrant his exclusion from the parish council meetings.
7. Mrs Dean again referred to the meeting on 7th July 2005 and the alleged influence that Councillor Willcock had brought to bear on the decision making. Mrs Dean admitted that the Chairman of the Parish Council had not indicated to her that it was the contribution of Mr Willcock which had influenced the decision at that meeting. However, she was aware that Councillor Willcock was present, that he had participated in discussion but she did not know how he had voted. Mrs Dean acknowledged that she did not know what Councillor Willcock had said at that meeting.
8. Regarding the letter of 4th May 2006 from Mr and Mrs Dring and in response to a question, Mrs Dean suggested that other than the first sentence of that letter she had no other evidence to support her allegation – that her correspondence to the parish council had been revealed to the Drings. Up to that stage, however, Mrs Dean suggested that she had a feeling that someone was feeding the Dring's information although she had no evidence to substantiate this assertion.

9. Mrs Dean suggested that before submission of her complaint to the Standards Board in June, Mr and Mrs Willcock had been regular visitors to Mr and Mrs Dring. They used a to gain entry to the Dring's around the rear of the house without knocking on the front door which suggested to her that the Willcock's were more than passing acquaintances. Since the complaint had been submitted, the visits of the Willcocks had ceased although Mrs Dean alleged that Mr Dring now visited Mr Willcock at his house in Lakefield Avenue. Mrs Dean believed they socialised together at the local pub although she had not seen them personally. It was not a secret that they were friends. (10)
10. Mrs Dean wished to add that she was a strong supporter of local government. She was particularly disappointed that the parish council had not taken action to resolve the problem themselves. She regretted that the situation had reached this stage. If local democracy was to be transparent it had to be seen to be fair to everyone – no one should receive preferential treatment. Mrs Dean believed she gave the parish clerk opportunities to investigate the issue. She felt that the Parish Council had tried to trivialise the issue in the belief that she would go away. (11)
- * (12)
11. As a final point Mrs Dean believed that the Parish Clerk was beyond reproach and that she had no reason to believe that she had released the correspondence to Mr Dring. She suspected Councillor Willcock in this matter because the letter of 4th May arrived some days after she had seen him visit Mr Dring. The Investigating Officer thanked Mrs Dean for attending.

The meeting ended at 2.52pm.

Signed..... *S. S. Poon*

Date..... *2/10/00*