

### Witness Statement of J.L.Davies.

I have agreed to be a witness at the Hearing because I would like the truth to be told as seen by an unbiased member of the Public.

My wife and I came to live in Upper Caldecote on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2013 and, as a means to understand the village, we attended the Parish Council Meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> April 2013. We did have an interest in one of the items on the Agenda, namely the Affordable Housing in Biggleswade Road. We had earlier received an invitation to a meeting to discuss the site as the plans showed 2 hammerheads, one of which pointed directly at [REDACTED] where we live. Having seen how developers, having got a foothold on land, often extended their operations we did not wish to see a large estate being built on land close by which at the moment gives us a very good view of the countryside. Nor did we wish to see the estate extended through into [REDACTED]

We attended this meeting and it was there that I first met Mr Robinson. The next time I saw him was at the Parish Council Meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> April 2013, so by appearing as a witness it can hardly be said I knew him as it was one occasion. Also we only called in at the end of the meeting as we were engaged elsewhere in St Neots..

I have had some experience as a Clerk for a small Parish Council and also as Clerk to several School Governing Bodies. I have attended training courses for both posts therefore feel I am qualified to comment on the meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> April 2013. When we arrived in the village a local resident invited us to join in various activities in the Caldecote pavilion and we went to the Parish Meeting to increase our knowledge of the village.

The Agenda had 15 items on it with many sub-sections. Item 3 was the Police Report which took some time after the usual early meeting preambles. Then the Public were invited to speak in the Open Forum for 10 Minutes. As usual this took more than the allotted time. 5 people spoke and were answered by the Chairman or the Clerk. One person stated the Council needed a Publicity Officer and offered his services, as he felt the Clerk was over-worked. The Chair stated the Clerk dealt with this but did not thank the person for his offer.

We then progressed to approval of Minutes and matters arising. Then Mr Robinson started to ask the Chair questions about the affordable housing site. The Clerk took over the answering of questions. As far as the public was concerned, they never heard or saw the Chair pass the questioning over to the Clerk. The Clerk never gave a straight forward answer to the questions saying at least twice that she did not have the information to hand and was speaking from memory. Surely, knowing an item was likely to come up for discussion, she should have the necessary papers to hand and not rely on her memory.

Mr Robinson has been accused of harassing and bullying the Clerk. If the Chair had taken control of the meeting and not left the Clerk "to hang out to dry", this whole unsavoury business would not have happened. Also Mr Robinson would not have been

harassed by some members of the Council. If the Clerk had all her papers with her and given the straight answers, Mr Robinson would not have got frustrated with the Chair and the resultant "bear pit" atmosphere would not have happened.

I must make it clear that the whole meeting took 51 minutes as stated in the Minutes and the shocking episode above took no more than 10 minutes as I believe the Clerk has corroborated.

Signed



John Davies.