

**MINUTES of a meeting of Little Downham Parish Council held in the Village Hall,
Main Street, Little Downham, on Thursday, 23 July 2015 commencing at 7.00pm.**

Councillors present: MM Oldfield, in the chair, and DA Adams-Payne, JW Barker, CE Hall, LEA Joel, MAC Seidler, BL Taylor, GH Taylor, JL Waters and KO Winters. Clerk: Mrs J Wardle

Other attendees: Dist. Cllr Anna Bailey, Caroline and Gordon Frankland and 11 parishioners.

Chairman's opening remarks: The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. She informed that Caroline and Gordon Frankland had decided not stand in recent election and therefore prior to the start of the meeting the Council would make a special presentation to Caroline in recognition for her years of service to the Council. Caroline was presented with a personalised Trinket Box, Thank You card and Certificate of Appreciation for 20 years of service. Thanks were expressed to Gordon for his five years of service.

48/15 TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Cllr RS Martin, County Cllr P Read and Dist. Cllr M Bradley.

49/15 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. **Cllr DA Adams-Payne** declared a prejudicial interest in item 54/15.1.3 (Application 15/00763/FUL) because she is a sister of the applicant (Declaration 019-2015).
2. **Cllr MM Oldfield** declared a personal interest in item 54/15.1.3 (Application 15/00763/FUL) because she is a friend of the applicant (Declaration 020-2015).
3. **Cllr BL Taylor** declared a prejudicial interest in item 54/15.1.2 (Application 15/00728/FUL) because he is the applicant's landlord (Declaration 021-2015).
4. **Cllr GH Taylor** declared a prejudicial interest in item 54/15.1.2 (Application 15/00728/FUL) because she is the applicant's landlord (Declaration 022-2015).
5. **Cllr JL Waters** declared a personal interest in item 54/15.1.2 (Application 15/00728/FUL) because she knows the applicant's wife and in item 54/15.1.3 (Application 15/00763/FUL) because she lives on Cannon Street (Declaration 023-2015).

50/15 PUBLIC FORUM

1. Mr Paul Hilsden was elected to speak on behalf of a group of ten residents in relation to item 54/15.1.2, who had expressed concerns and raised objections against the application. They had sent their comments to the ECDC and provided copies for the Parish Council. Mr Nicholas, the applicant of Application 15/00728/FUL, explained details of his proposed development to the Council in answer to the residents' concerns and objections.

51/15 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS

1. Dist. Cllr Anna Bailey reported on the success of the District Council's 100-day commitment since the elections in May, which focused on progressing six areas to benefit and improve the conditions for residents and businesses in East Cambridgeshire. A Local Authority Trading Company will be up and running from January 2016 to develop commercial land opportunities for the Council; £1 million has been committed to the Ely Southern Bypass via the community Infrastructure Levy; work is set to begin this autumn on the cinema in Ely and the district Leisure Centre part of the development is moving forward in terms of procurement, design and build; a new Corporate Plan was adopted in July setting out the Corporate priorities for 2015-19 and a target of eight apprenticeships has been set to be delivered by the Economic Development Team. The Boundary Commission has confirmed it is 'minded to approve' a reduction in the number of members at the Council and has started a review and public consultation on the Ward boundaries.
2. Dist. Cllr Bailey reported on the Boundary Commission's review of the County Divisions and confirmed that local County and District Councillors had a different point of view to the Commission's proposed Super Division of Haddenham, Sutton, Downham Villages, Littleport West and Ely North. A decision is expected at the end of September.

52/15 TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. **Resolved** that the minutes of 25 June 2015 were correct and to be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

53/15 **MATTERS TO REPORT**

1. **(Min.27/15) All Weather Court – maintenance re-spray** – The court and inside perimeter of the fence was re-sprayed on 29/06/15 by Artificial Grass Cambridge Ltd.
2. **(Min.27/15) Pymoor play area replacement seesaw** - Installation is due the week commencing 10th August. Notices will be put up informing that the play area will be closed while work takes place.
3. **(Min.27/15) Book Café refurbishment and room alterations** – Book Café sessions will be closed during week of 3rd to 7th August for the removal of the dropped ceiling, redecorating and refurbishment. Sessions begin on 10th August. Notices will be put up at the Book Café and has been included in the Parish Council entry for the August magazine.
4. **(Min.37/15.3) Badger concerns along Hundred Foot Bank, Pymoor** – Chris Rule (Environment Agency Ouse Washes Field Team STM, Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire Area) informed that the Environment Agency has an extensive visual asset inspection programme, as well as an additional vermin inspection that includes all raised earth flood embankments. Vermin inspections have identified four separate locations where badgers have excavated under the haul road (track) and are in the bank side of the fence line. The total number of holes represents approx 7/8 entrances etc. The Environment Agency has applied to Natural England for licences to effectively install one way gates, to exclude the badger and fill (probably grout but they also consider excavation and re compacting) and make good each location individually. This work is seasonally limited by the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and is proposed to be carried out this autumn (September and October). A copy of Mr Rule's email and an attached email response of a site inspection held on 25/02/15 were given to all members for information.

Pymoor Recreation Field – Work and access in the rear garden to No. 11 Pymoor Lane

The Clerk reported that it was brought to her attention on 17/07/15 that a JCB and dumper truck were driving on the recreation field going in and out of the garden. The Clerk visited the site and spoke to Mr Ure, who was carrying out the work. He confirmed that old hedging had been removed to allow access to the garden to erect a large shed and patio area and that work would be completed within a couple of days. The Clerk accepted the explanation from Mr Ure on this occasion and requested that in future he contact her prior to commencing work via the Recreation field. This would ensure that the Council is aware of the work taking place and the Clerk is able to answer queries or concern expressed by members of the public.

54/15 **PLANNING MATTERS**

1. Planning correspondence -
- 1.1 **15/00640/FUL** Mr Terry Needs, Holly Bush House, Downham Common, Lt Downham – Construction of new chalet style dwelling on land to the side access of same driveway (Potential Departure) - **Resolved that the Parish Council had concerns regarding this application and recommended outright refusal due to the proposed development being outside of the development envelopes of Little Downham and Pymoor and the proposed dwelling being built on land not designated for residential dwelling.**

7.41pm Cllrs BL & GH Taylor left the meeting prior to the following item being discussed.

- 1.2 **15/00728/FUL** Mr M Nicholas, Land north of 20 Martins Lane, Lt Downham – Proposed 5 bed dwelling - **Resolved that the Parish Council had concerns regarding this application and recommended amendments to the scheme relating to the following reasons:**
 1. **Parking** – It was considered not enough on-site parking for the proposed 5-bed dwelling on this narrow lane.
 2. **Size and height of the dwelling** – A 5-bed dwelling on this site was considered too large because the proposed ridge height is higher than neighbouring properties.
 3. **Design of dwelling** – The proposed design, materials and white render finish was considered not in keeping with the street scene.**Additional comment:**
 4. **The Parish Council considered its comment following representations from the applicants and from ten local residents attending the council meeting expressing objections to the application.**

8.02pm Cllrs BL & GH Taylor were invited back into the meeting.
Cllr DA Adams-Payne left the meeting prior to the following item being discussed.
10 parishioners left the meeting

- 1.3 **15/00763/FUL** Mr K Missin, 35 Cannon Street, Lt Downham – Single storey extension to rear - **Resolved that the Parish Council had no concerns.**

8.05pm Cllr DA Adams-Payne was invited back into the meeting.
Dist. Cllr Bailey and two parishioners left the meeting.

For information only:

- 1.4 ECDC: Applications approved: 15/00563/FUL, 15/00572/FUL,
1.5 ECDC: Applications refused: 15/00328/FUL

55/15 FINANCE

1. **Monthly Internal Audit** was carried out by Cllrs DA Adams-Payne and GH Taylor.
2. **To accept ECDC S106 Grant conditions awarded for Pymoor Seesaw Replacement Project** – Members were pleased the grant was approved and viewed the terms of the grant.
Resolved unanimously to accept ECDC S106 Grant conditions awarded for Pymoor Seesaw Replacement Project.
3. **Friends of Downham Feoffees School – Grant request towards whole school theatre trip** - It was agreed to pledge funds towards the transport for the whole school, which is being organised by a separate body and is extra-curricular. During discussion, Cllr DA Adams-Payne proposed that the Council should pledge £500; this was not seconded. Cllr KO Winters proposed and Cllr JW Barker seconded that the Council should pledge £550. Cllr Adams-Payne withdrew her proposal.
Resolved unanimously to pledge £550 towards the Friends of Downham Feoffees School whole school trip to Hunstanton Theatre under Local Government Act 1972, Section 137.
4. **To approve bills and other items for payment** - The following items presented for payment were proposed by Cllr DA Adams-Payne and seconded by Cllr GH Taylor.
Resolved unanimously to approve the BACS payments 335 - 343 and direct debits for the total sum of £6042.66.

56/15 PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND ASSETS

1. **To review BMX Track in Lt Downham Recreation Area** – It was noted that the BMX track is rarely used by youths these days and as a result the weeds are now growing on the track. The Clerk reported trying to arrange for the track designer to meet with youths to re-design it last year but she was unsuccessful with getting all parties together. Cllr BL Taylor informed that Mr Freeman (Freeman Plant Hire), who had carried out ditch cleaning last year, had offered to use his digger to carry out some work to tidy up the track.
Resolved unanimously to accept Mr Freeman's offer to tidy the track and for Cllr BL Taylor to liaise with Mr Freeman regarding the project.
2. **To consider carrying out annual risk assessment** – Cllr DA Adams-Payne volunteered her husband to carry out the annual risk assessment free of charge.
Resolved unanimously to accept Cllr Adams-Payne's offer for Tony Payne (Chartered Safety & Health Practitioner) to carry out the Annual Risk Assessment of Parish Council assets, if Mr Payne is available and happy to do so.

57/15 PARISH MATTERS

1. **Boundary Commission – Review of East Cambridgeshire Ward boundaries** - It was noted that the Boundary Commission has commenced an electoral review of the District Council Ward Boundaries in order to deliver electoral equality for voters across the District. The initial consultation closed on 31/08/15.
Resolved unanimously to submit a representation to recommend that Downham Villages Ward be amended to a one-councillor ward of Little Downham, Pymoor, Coveney and Wardy Hill villages. It considered that Little Downham and Coveney Parishes are very similar neighbouring rural and agricultural communities with close connections through families and relatives, the Downham, Pymoor & Coveney Parish Magazine, combined Church Services and public transport bus routes.
The Boundary Commission will consider all representations made during the initial consultation and will publish a draft recommendation in November 2015. There will be a further period of public consultation on the draft recommendations before the final recommendations are published in April 2016.

58/15 HIGHWAYS, PARISH PATHS & BYWAYS

1. Replies re matters reported from previous meetings

- 1.1 **(Min.43/15.2.1) Bridges at Dunkirk and Gravel Head** – CCC bridges dept believe the structures are safe enough but the surrounding carriageway is sinking and at not only this bridge but also the whole road is severely misshapen. The extent of repairs needed is way beyond the local officer's budget so she will bring it to her manager's attention for extra funding or it put it forward for a scheme request. The other bridge near Main drove junction also has a lip forming so something will be done with that one when a colleague is back off holiday and has had chance to visit. Some work at Downham Common bridge has been ordered to be done to help smooth the dips but it will get included if any scheme money comes forth.
- 1.2 **(Min.43/15.1.2.2) Overgrown verges** – CCC informs that grass cutting of verges in the countryside will take place in early August.
- 1.3 **(Min.43/15.2.3) Black Bank Road, Lt Downham** – The Highways officer acknowledged that this is a usual place that sinks and will see what can be done to improve it. In the meantime, a temporary 'SLOW' sign will be placed in the verge to give extra warning for drivers to slow down.
- 1.4 **(Min.43/15.2.4) Potholes** – arrangements are being made for the potholes on Lawn Lane and Station Road to be repaired.
- 1.5 **(Min.43/15.2.5) Street lights** – Mark Oldfield is forwarding instructions to the Team to re-position the street columns adjacent to the church archway and on Church Green. The Interactive sign and Pelican Crossing lights are now working.

2. To report current matters of concern

- 2.1 **Downham Feoffees School Trees Overhanging Footways** – The Clerk was instructed to write to the head teacher and the Chair of Governors to request that the trees be trimmed over the footpaths on Main Street and the entrance to the Allotments. As the school is closed for the summer holidays, the Clerk will send the request in September.

59/15 REQUEST OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

- 1. Grant funding for the Zipwire

Non agenda item

All Weather Court, Lt Downham - It was agreed that during the school summer holidays, 27 July to 4 September between 10 am and 5 pm, the 16 year olds and under would be able to hire the court, subject to availability, for £1 per hour. They would be required to contact the Booking Clerk, Mrs Holland, to arrange the booking and obtain the key. Mrs Holland will be asked to monitor usage of the concession for future reference.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.09 pm.

Signed (Chairman) Date