

LITTLE DOWNHAM PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES of a meeting of the Parish Council held in the Village Hall, Main Street,
Little Downham, on Thursday, 27 November 2008 commencing at 7.00pm.

Councillors present: DA Adams-Payne, in the chair, CM Frankland, CE Hall, EW Hall, M Oldfield, RS Martin, RC Stacey, BL Taylor (7.03pm), AJ White and KO Winters.

In attendance: PC K Humble, Dist. Cllrs A Bailey & T Goodge and 2 parishioners.

APOLOGIES - Received from Cllr DJ Badcock, County Cllr P Read and PCSO J Hall.

124/08 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. RS Martin declared a prejudicial interest in item 131/08.1.1 because he is a tenant and farms the land.

125/08 TO ADJOURN MEETING FOR PUBLIC FORUM

7.02pm Meeting adjourned - A parishioner informed the Council of correspondence he had received from ECDC. The Chairman thanked the parishioner and informed that the Council will bear his comments in mind should it be consulted.

7.03pm Cllr BL Taylor arrived.

7.07pm One parishioner left. Meeting reconvened.

126/08 PARISH CRIME MATTERS

1. Police Crime Reports – Seven crimes were reported in Lt Downham and two in Pymoor between 16/10/08 and 25/11/08. There were also 29 calls for services in Lt Downham and 16 in Pymoor.

2. To report recent events – The public notice board on the side of the village hall had been set on fire and the Clerk had reported three occasions of arson in the Spectator Shelter.

7.23pm PC Humble left.

127/08 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS (Dist. Cllrs A Bailey & A Goodge)

1. Cllr Bailey reported that under the Freedom of Information Act she had finally received information from Post Office Limited relating to other Post Office Branches including Great Gransden, which was given a reprieve. Based on this, she believed that Lt Downham could argue the case why its branch is to close. Cllr Bailey informed she will put a letter together. The Council agreed to write and endorse it.

128/08 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT (County Cllr P Read) – No report received.

129/08 TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

1. RESOLVED: The minutes of 16 October 2008 (Full Council) were approved and signed as a true record.

2. RESOLVED: The minutes of 06 November 2008 (Extraordinary) were approved and signed as a true record.

130/08 MATTERS TO REPORT

1. (Min.111/08.2) Changes to contracted bus service in Lt Downham Parish – CCC confirmed the 115 and 116 services have been retained but the 213 service had been withdrawn.

2. (Min.111/08.3) Trees on Ely Road – The Handyman and Cllr Martin have assessed the trees. The Handyman will trim and raise the crowns where necessary. Mr Alan Martin has offered to assist in removing the branches. This work will be done in the next few weeks.

3. (Min.111/08.8) Post Office Closure – Replies were received from CCC and ECDC. A copy of CCC reply was sent to councillors. A copy was sent to Mrs Atwal for reference with the invitation from Mr Hosking (CCC) of a meeting with the Parish Council. No reply was received from Mrs Atwal.

4. (Min.113/08.4) Short term investment of Council funds – The Fixed Rate Bond has been set up. Due to a change of interest rates, the Bond will earn 6.00% interest over 9 months maturing on 29/07/09.

5. (Min.114/08) Chettisham Meadow Wildlife Trust Appeal – A letter of thanks was received from the Wildlife Trust for the Council's donation.

131/08 PLANNING MATTERS

1. To consider planning applications received:

7.40pm Cllr Martin left the meeting before the following item was discussed. Cllr Oldfield declared a personal interest because the applicant is a friend.

1.1 08/01010/OUT Mr K Hobbs, Land adjacent to 21A Cannon Street, Lt Downham – Outline application for 1no. 4bed house & garage

RESOLVED: *Little Downham Parish Council had concerns about this application and recommended outright refusal for the following reasons:*

1. **Backland Development** – *The proposed dwelling is set far back off Cannon Street and is not inline with any neighbouring properties. Being sited to the rear of 21 Cannon Street and with access via a narrow driveway, this is considered as backland development.*
2. **Street Scene** – *It is considered that the siting of the proposed dwelling is not in keeping with the street scene and neighbouring properties.*

7.47pm Cllr Martin was invited back to the meeting.

1.2 08/01013/FUL Mr & Mrs David Scott, Isle Veterinary Surgery, West Fen Road, Ely – Change of use of barn to large animal veterinary centre

RESOLVED: *The Parish Council had no concerns.*

1.3 08/01024/FUL Blueriver Property Development Ltd, Land to rear of 47 Main Street, Lt Downham – Demolition of garage and some outbuilding and erection of 1no. 2bed house

RESOLVED: *Little Downham Parish Council had concerns about this application and recommended outright refusal for the following reasons:*

1. **Proposed Dwelling** - *The proposed dwelling, by reason of its height, width and proximity to the boundary is considered un-neighbourly, would have an overbearing oppressive impact on the residential amenity of adjoining properties and is considered an overdevelopment of the site.*
2. **Parking** – *There is considered a lack of sufficient parking area available for the proposed dwelling and No. 47 Main Street. Holme Lane is a narrow lane with limited road width and footpath due to some existing dwellings that abut the carriageway, which restricts the availability of on street parking.*
3. **Neighbour's concerns** - *It is recommended that the Local Planning Authority considers local parishioners' concerns; in particular, the Parish Council has received correspondence from the resident of 45 Main Street, Lt Downham.*

2. Planning correspondence

For information only:

2.1 ECDC - Applications approved: 08/00868/FUL, 08/00898/FUL

2.2 ECDC - Applications refused: 08/00920/FUL

2.3 ECDC Notification of appeal against an enforcement notice issued on 01/10/08

Location:	Land at Black Bank Road, Little Downham
D of E Appeal Reference:	APP/V0510/C/08/2088954
Appellant's Name:	RE Parisi
Deadline date:	18/12/08

8.01pm Dist. Cllrs A Bailey & T Goodge and one parishioner left.

132/08 FINANCE

1. **Monthly Internal Audit** - carried out by Cllrs DA Adams-Payne and M Oldfield.

2. **To approve continuation of Street Light Maintenance & Energy Agreement with CCC** – The annual maintenance charge of 7 lamps for 2009/10 is £18.39 each and the energy charge is expected to be £207.55.

RESOLVED: *To continue with Cambridgeshire County Council Street Light Maintenance and Energy Agreement for 2009/10.*

3. **To consider Admin & Finance Committee recommendations re Budget Proposals and Precept for 2009/10** – The Committee's report was approved.

RESOLVED: *To approve the budget proposals for 2009/10 with amendments and inform ECDC that the Precept's estimate at this time is £71,897.*

4. **To consider Play Area & Recreation Committee recommendation to purchase play area parts and materials as suggested in the Annual Inspection Report** – It was agreed to purchase paint and parts for the handyman to utilize.

RESOLVED: *To authorise the purchase of paint and parts from Wicksteed Leisure Ltd as recommended in the 2008 Annual Inspection Report.*

5. **To approve bills and other items for payment** –

RESOLVED: *To approve list of payments for cheque numbers 000459 to 000469 and direct debits for the total sum of £3201.30.*

133/08 PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

1. To consider changing the day of meetings (Cllr DA Adams-Payne) – An alternative day for meetings could not be agreed. The matter will be reviewed again in the new year.

134/08 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

1. To adopt Information Commissioner's model Publication Scheme for Parish Councils – Issued under Freedom of Information Act 2000, s.20, the new Model Scheme was considered.

RESOLVED: To adopt the Information Commissioner's Model Publication Scheme, which will come into effect on 01/01/09.

135/08 ANNUAL RISK ASSESSMENT

1. To consider Annual Risk Assessment Report produced by Mr A Payne – The matters for further action were considered and will be forwarded to the Clerk and Handyman for action.

RESOLVED: To accept the 2008 Annual Risk Assessment Report, to approve the further actions be carried out by the Clerk and Handyman, as required, and to thank Mr Payne for his time in this matter. The Council will review the further actions at its meeting in February.

136/08 PARISH MATTERS

1. Ely & Soham Dial-a-ride - Donation request and invitation to AGM, Tuesday 20 January 2009 at 11.30am at Witchford Village Hall – The Council agreed to donate £100 on this occasion. No-one expressed an interest to attend the AGM.

RESOLVED: To donate £100 to Ely & Soham Dial-a-Ride (cheque no. 000470) under LGA 1972, Section 137, as amended.

2. CCC Public Transport Consultation – Proposals for tender including options for the 125 Service – deadline 8 December 2008 –

RESOLVED: To recommend that the current 125 service be maintained and to object to option 3 of the Cottenham 106 service proposal.

3. ECDC LDF Submission core Strategy – Site Allocations and Boundary Change

Representations (Regulation 32) Nov. 2008 – The consultation papers were handed to councillors (in pairs) for consideration. The Council's comments to be considered at the meeting on 11/12/08.

137/08 CONSERVATION MATTERS

1. To consider sheep grazing in Holts Meadow during months December to February/March – The request was agreed.

RESOLVED: To approve that Mr L Smith may graze no more than 20 sheep on Holts Meadow between now and the end of February 2008.

138/08 YOUTH ACTIVITIES

1. To appoint a Parish Council Representative on the Youth Group Committee – In his absence, Cllr D Badcock was appointed until May 2009. The Clerk will confirm acceptance by Cllr Badcock before informing the Youth Group.

8.50pm Mr Jordan arrived.

139/08 HIGHWAYS

1. Replies re matters reported from previous meetings

1.1 Footpath 28 – Following an email complaint from a parishioner of encroachment by the allotments, the P3 representative had been to look at the footpath. Cllr Winters reported that he did not consider there to be an encroachment. The Clerk was instructed to write to the Downham Feoffees to request that the footpath be looked at to widen it.

1.2 Main Street, Pymoor - This is a sewer manhole and is to be reported to Anglian Water.

1.3 Main Street (near Eagles Lane), Lt Downham – The water leak has been repaired. The report of excess water lying at this junction will be monitored by CCC Highways during wet weather to see if there is a problem.

1.4 B1411 Between Mill Hill and Pymoor – The dip on the side of the carriageway between Willow Farm and the first tree towards Pymoor has been marked for patching.

1.5 Footpath 27 – Karen Whymark (CCC P3 Officer) replied informing that it was not usual practice to put safety barriers on culverts as they don't constitute a change of surface like a bridge does. She is willing to meet with Cllr Winters (Council's P3 rep) to look at this.

1.6 Byway 47 – Karen Whymark replied informing that the Order to close the Byway to public vehicles was due to work carried out by the drainage board on behalf of CCC and to allow the route to repair/settle during the winter.

2. To report current matters of concern

2.1 Hurst Lane, Lt Downham - Downham Parish Conservation Group expressed concern regarding the speed of vehicles travelling down Hurst Lane. It was requested that a pedestrian sign and/or speed sign be erected at the entrance of Hurst Lane.

2.2 Cowbridge Hall Road, Lt Downham - A large hole in the lay-by nearest to Ely Road needs filling.

2.3 High Road / The Hythe, Lt Downham (near corner of Mill Hill) – A hole by the manhole cover at this junction needs filling.

2.4 Black Bank Road, Lt Downham – The Clerk was instructed to write to CCC Highways to express the following and request that a reply be received for the 11/12/08 meeting:

2.4.1 The Council renewed its plea for better conditions on Black Bank Road and work to be carried out to widen it following an incident today in which a tractor and trailer left the road and rolled down the bank into a field.

2.4.2 Recent patching work near Black Bank Business Centre is very much appreciated but hasn't covered the whole area of concern. It has since deteriorated to cause a dip and is now considered unsafe.

140/08 CORRESPONDENCE

1. Mr & Mrs Jordan – California – Request of Council's support regarding sewage and highway problems – The Council agreed to arrange a site visit on 05/12/08 with CCC Highways to observe the problems. Mr & Mrs Jordan were invited to attend.

9.30pm Mr Jordan left.

2. Cheffins – Agent for Mrs Dowden, 3 Pymoor Lane, Pymoor – Request to lay a drainage pipe along the northern boundary of Pymoor Recreation Ground and eastern corner of the Play Area

- The Council agreed to the request but required the following conditions to be stipulated in the reply:

1. that the pipe and materials used are as recommended by Littleport & Downham Internal Drainage Board as required for a gravel field drain and stone filled to near the surface;
2. that the recreation field and play area are fully reinstated to no less than their original condition;
3. that maintenance of the pipe is the responsibility of Mrs Dowden or the purchaser and is included in the deeds for surface water drainage only for the specified dwelling(s);
4. that the pipe is large enough to take into account possible use by the future development north of the recreation field boundary;

Cllr Taylor reported that he had jet-washed the tiles in Pymoor Play Area. Thanks were expressed to Cllr Taylor for his time in this matter.

141/08 REQUEST OF ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING –

1. Black Bank Road –for reply from CCC Highways at 11/12/08 meeting.

142/08 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

It is hereby resolved in accordance with Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted at Agenda Item 143/08, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded from this meeting and they are herewith instructed to withdraw.

143/08 HUMAN RESOURCES

1. To consider Clerk's Annual Staff Appraisal Report –Cllr Winters requested a copy of the Clerk's Job Description – this was given to him by the Chairman.

9.43pm The Clerk left the meeting. The Council discussed the appraisal in detail.

9.57pm The Clerk was invited back into the meeting. In the Clerk's absence no notes were taken of the closed session. The Chairman recorded the following decision and comments.

RESOLVED: To approve the Clerk's Appraisal Report, to authorise Cllr R Stacey to assist the Clerk in looking for a new computer and software suitable for the Council's future computer and accounting requirements and authorise the Clerk to purchase a new chair for her office.

Cllr Oldfield commended the Chairman on a thorough appraisal. The Council acknowledged the Clerk was conscientious in her work and expressed it was grateful to the clerk for all she does in the parish. The Clerk thanked the Council for its considerations and comments.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 10.00pm.