

**MINUTES of a meeting of Little Downham Parish Council held in the Village Hall,
Main Street, Little Downham, on Thursday, 31 May 2012 commencing at 7.00pm.**

Councillors present: DA Adams-Payne, in the chair, and CM Frankland, GF Frankland, CE Hall, RS Martin, MM Oldfield, BL Taylor, GH Taylor and KO Winters.

In attendance: Stewart Patience (ECDC Forward Planning Officers) and one member of the public.

14/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Cllr BGF Smith, County Cllr P Read and Linda Joel.

15/12 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. **Cllr BL Taylor** declared a personal & prejudicial interest in item 18/12 (ECDC – Pymoor Village Vision Site Survey) because his property is identified in the Survey. (Declaration 013-2012)
2. **Cllr GH Taylor** declared a personal & prejudicial interest in item 18/12 (ECDC – Pymoor Village Vision Site Survey) because her property is identified in the Survey. (Declaration 014-2012)

16/12 ECDC: PYMOOR VILLAGE VISION – SITE SURVEY RESULTS

1. **Representative from ECDC to present consultation results** – Stewart Patience issued members with a copy of the results and explained in more detail.

17/12 PUBLIC FORUM

Councillors that had declared prejudicial interests were invited to address the meeting in relation to the respective items on the agenda. Cllr G Taylor briefly explained the reasons for her land being proposed for housing in the survey.

7.11pm Having declared interests in the next item, Cllrs BL & GH Taylor left the meeting.

18/12 ECDC: PYMOOR VILLAGE VISION – SITE SURVEY

1. **To comment on consultation results** – It was noted that 67 responses had been returned from the 169 that were delivered. It was noted that there was little difference in the totals for each site and it was not a big enough response for the Council to make a judgement. Stewart Patience agreed. He will now draft a Parish Vision and return at the Council's meeting in July.

19/12 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS (Dist. Cllrs A Bailey & A Goodge)

1. Cllr Bailey had nothing to report but would stay for items further down the agenda.

20/12 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT (County Cllr P Read)

1. County Cllr Read emailed informing on a District matter that he, as Chairman of the Planning Committee, and Peter Moakes (Leader of ECDC) were reviewing some ECDC policies such as the size allowed for replacement dwellings and building in the Countryside. If the Parish Council has any strong views on this (or any other policy), to let him, Tony or Anna know. The Council made no comment on this occasion.

21/12 PARISH COUNCIL VACANCY

1. **To co-opt new councillor** – Two applications were received. The Clerk explained the 'one councillor, one vote' system and the Chairman read out each candidate's application. The result of a paper ballot was that Linda Joel received 5 votes and Linden Roberts received 4. The Clerk, as the Proper Officer of the Council, duly declared Linda Joel as the new councillor of the Parish Council. The Chairman thanked Linden for her attendance and interest in the Council.

7.35pm Linden Roberts left the meeting.

2. **New Councillor to sign Declaration of Acceptance** – The Clerk will arrange for Cllr Joel to sign a Declaration of Acceptance before the next meeting.
3. **To formally appoint the new councillor as a Downham Feoffees Charity representative** – This agenda item was missed during the meeting. It will be included on the agenda 21/06/12.

22/12 TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

1. Cllr KO Winters made a point of order that he believes the minutes are bringing the Council into disrepute and that he thinks he'll take it to the Ombudsman regarding item 205/11.1.6, comment sent to the planning inspectorate, No. 4. He stated that he has a licence. It was pointed out to him that it was the comment expressed by parishioners during a period when he was absent from the meeting. Cllr Winters also informed that not all people in the public area were parishioners. A vote result to approve amended minutes was: 7 In favour, 1 Abstention and 1 Against.

Resolved that the minutes of 19 April 2012 (Full Council) be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record after the word *parishioners* was amended to *members of the public* in the In Attendance section and in the sentence at the end of item 205/11.1.6.

2. **Resolved** unanimously that the minutes of 10 May 2012 AGM be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.
3. **Resolved** unanimously that the minutes of 10 May 2012 (general meeting) be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

23/12 **MATTERS TO REPORT**

1. **(Min.13/12) To approve and authorise signing of Queen Elizabeth II Fields in Trust Deed** – Confirmation that the Chairman and Vice Chairman had signed the Deed following Fields in Trust amending the document to include community activities and the buildings and facilities on the property. A Queen Elizabeth II Field in Trust Plaque had been received and will be fixed to the Pavilion. A dedication ceremony will be included in the Fete opening on 09/06/12.
2. **Chambers Way Development, Main Street, Lt Downham** – It was reported that in accordance with the Unilateral Agreement dated August 2007, the Section 106 funding from the development for the Parish Council's projects (CCTV £7500 and play equipment £15500) is linked to movements in the RICS / BCIS "All in Tender" Index. As the rate has dropped since 2007, the funding is reduced to £6713.71 for CCTV and £13875.00 for play equipment. Revised quotes for the purchase of play equipment were to be considered further down the meeting's agenda.
3. **Notification of ECDC Chairman and Vice Chairman for the civic year 2012/13** – Dist. Cllr Tony Parramint was re-elected as Chairman of the Council and Dist. Cllr Tony Cornell was elected as Vice Chairman. Their wives will accompany them on engagements.

24/12 **PLANNING MATTERS**

1. **Planning correspondence -**

- 1.1 11/01099/FUL Deanta UK Ltd, North west of 3 to 5 Straight Furlong, Pymoor – Addition of B8 storage and distribution shed (720m") – **Amendment** – Repositioning and redesign of proposed building on site to protect trees on north-eastern boundary:
 - Building set back 1.5m closer to rear boundary
 - Depth increased by 2m, width decreased by 2m
 - Ridge height 0.3m higher
 - Distance from front boundary remains same as originally proposed

The Chairman read the Council's comment on the original proposal. It was agreed that the comments were still valid on the amended proposal albeit taking into account a change of the proposed measurements above. In addition, it was considered that the road way in and out of the site is not of B8 standard requirement to allow two HCVs to pass.

Resolved unanimously that Little Downham Parish Council still has concerns about this application and recommends outright refusal of permission for the reasons previously quoted and the additional reason below:

1. It is noted that the site access road has been widened by a lease of land, but it is not believed to be of B8 standard requirement to allow two Heavy Commercial Vehicles (HCVs) to pass.

For information only:

- 1.2 ECDC Applications approved: 12/00158/FUL, 12/00227/FUL, 12/00256/FUL, 12/00265/FUL,

25/12 **FINANCE**

1. **Monthly Internal Audit** was carried out by Cllrs DA Adams-Payne and BL Taylor.
2. **To approve draft Annual Report 2011/12** – The draft report was considered and approved. **Resolved** that the Annual Report 2011/12 be approved and copies be made available in the Book Café and some local outlets.
3. **Downham Parish Conservation Group – Request funding for refreshments at 'Main Street in Bloom' prize giving event in September** – The event is to be held on 14/09/12 at 7.30pm. **Resolved** unanimously to approve the request of up to £50 for refreshments at the 'Main Street in Bloom' event on 14/09/12.

It was noted that the Conservation Group was fundraising to cover a £12 shortfall for the Beehive Project in Pingle Wood. The Council will consider the matter at the next meeting.

4. **Audit Commission letter – consultation on appointment of external auditor for 2012/13 and future years** – It is proposed that Littlejohn LLP is appointed to audit the annual returns of all small bodies Cambridgeshire as from 01/09/12 for five years. The Council had no objections to the Audit Commission's proposal.
5. **To consider adopting a policy for making online payments** – The Council considered a draft policy drawn up by the Clerk based on current and additional internal audit controls that will comply with the statutory requirement of two councillors authorising each payment and help reduce the number of cheques that are produced and posted each month. It was noted that some creditors prefer online payments, other local Councils produce online payments and that the policy is subject and adaptable to change in accordance with law and statutory regulations. A vote to adopt the policy was: 8 In favour and 1 Against.
Resolved unanimously to adopt the policy and amend the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Financial Risk Assessment & Management documents to include the policy.
6. **To approve bills and other items for payment** - Proposed Cllr MM Oldfield, seconded Cllr BL Taylor and unanimously agreed.
Resolved unanimously to approve list of payments for cheque numbers 000988 to 000989 and Direct Debits for the total sum of £330.93.
7. **For information: Local Government Pension Scheme: Ill health liability insurance** – Due to significant changes in April 2008 to ill health retirement rules in the Local Government Pension Scheme, the Cambridgeshire Pension Service has purchased insurance to reduce the risk to employers. It covers two of the three Tiers of ill health liability and in summary, the benefits to the parish council include:
 - All employees will be covered by the ill health insurance policy from 01/04/12.
 - The Council will not be asked to pay any additional costs in the event of Tier 1 or Tier 2 ill-health early retirement.
 - Contribution rates will not vary as a result of ill-health early retirement experience,
 - A reduction in the risks faced by the council as a participating employer within the LGPS.
 It is noted at the end of the letter that there is no change to the contributions that the Parish Council pays and it is not required to do anything further at this time.

26/12 **PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND ASSETS**

1. **Pavilion Extension: Update** – Still waiting for planning approval. The working group will arrange to meet at the pavilion to assess refurbishment requirements. Cllr Frankland will check with Carol Hebbard about the Youth Group's interest in grants to ensure there is no seeking of funds from the same funder.
2. **Cemetery working group: Update** – It was reported that ECDC will not individually view land because other authorities also need to be consulted, which will happen when the planning application is submitted. The Chairman asked Cllrs B & G Taylor if they had received any feedback from ECDC regarding their proposals on land off Cowbridge Hall Road. They said no, other than ECDC asking them for their ideas. The working group will arrange to meet and identify a site for the Council to consider.
3. **To receive and consider Annual Risk Assessment reports from Tony Payne** – A summary of the reports were observed and discussed.
Resolved unanimously to accept the reports by Mr Payne and address action required that is not already dealt with or covered in the Clerk or Handyman's general duties or within other projects such as the Pavilion Extension and Refurbishment or replacement of future play equipment. The Clerk was asked to write a letter of thanks to Mr Payne.
4. **To arrange planting of Commemorative Tree on Church Green, Lt Downham** – The tree had been delivered to Stoney Hoof Farm and is ready for planting. It was agreed to plant the tree on Saturday, 2 June, the start of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Commemorative Year celebrations.

27/12 **PARISH MATTERS**

1. **Peter Moakes letter - Reply regarding Dist. Cllr A Bailey** – The Chairman read a reply from Dist. Cllr Moakes, which the Council felt did not address its concerns. It was agreed that the Clerk should write again to Cllr Moakes stating that the 'punishment' he has cast on Cllr Bailey has resulted in the Parish also being punished. If she was on a committee, Cllr Bailey would have committee voting rights in addition to voting at quarterly full council meetings.

2. **A Bailey Email – Parish Council consultation re possible car parking charges in Ely** – The Council felt that parking charges would mostly affect people from the villages around Ely and was opposed to charges being introduced.
3. **CCC letter – Street Light Briefing Invitation Monday, 18/06/12 7pm – 8.30pm Ely** – It was agreed for the Clerk to attend and report back at the next meeting.
4. **Report from Neighbourhood Panel Meeting (16/04/12) (Cllr KO Winters)** – Cllr Winters informed that the police had a good result on clamping down on scrap dealers as its priority at the previous meeting. It was not a priority now.
Cllr KO Winters left the meeting and returned 9.09pm.

9.07pm

28/12 HIGHWAYS, PARISH PATHS & BYWAYS

1. **Replies re matters reported from previous meetings –**
 - 1.1 **Cowbridge Hall Road, Lt Downham** - The pothole was repaired on 20/03/12. A 13 week planned order has been requested for planings to be compacted in areas of verge over run.
 - 1.2 **Beald Drove, Lt Downham** – This was inspected and not considered too bad; however, as work is planned in Cowbridge Hall Road, the contractor has been asked to fill the worst on the drove.
 - 1.3 **North Fen Drove, Lt Downham** – Potholes were filled in North Fen on 10/04/12. The patching budget is limited but a 13 week planned order has been placed for the potholes to be filled.
2. **To report current matters of concern:**
 - 2.1 **Adventurers Drove, Oxlode** – Pothole needs filling about one third along the road
 - 2.2 **Black Bank Road, Lt Downham** – A massive dip has formed outside No. 2.
 - 2.3 **B1411, outside No. 2 Mount Pleasant Cottages, Main Street, Pymoor** - Request again for the verges to be cut out to allow water to drain away from the dips on the side of the road.
 - 2.4 **Third Drove, Lt Downham** – Large pothole outside Home Farm, before No. 3.
 - 2.5 **Street lighting** – ‘Dayburner’ reported outside No. 17 Eagles Lane, Lt Downham.
3. **CCC letter – Grass cutting: Public Rights of Way** – The wet weather has delayed the start of the annual grass cutting round. If any issues with specific paths needing a cut, CCC wants to know by mid June. A copy of the letter will be given to the Conservation Group to consider.
4. **ShapeYourPlace – Little Downham Cycle Path – request to investigate adopting the path as an official shared use path** – This was emailed on the new county community website and forwarded to the Clerk. The comment was noted but considered it to be a Highways issue.

29/12 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 30/12, 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.

30/12 TENDERS

1. **To consider quotes to replace the All Weather Court Fence in Lt Downham Recreation Area** – Three quotes were received. Kestrel Fencing quote was preferred, although no quotes confirmed inclusion of ground cover in the goal recesses. The Clerk will enquire.
Resolved unanimously to accept Kestrel Fencing quotation subject to additional costs for goal recess ground cover.
2. **To consider quotes to replace safety surfacing in Lt Downham and Pymoor Play Areas** – The Council deferred decision to request a quote from Fenland Leisure Products.
3. **To review updated quotes to replace the roundabout and log world unit in Lt Downham Play Area (Min.235/10)** – Revised quotes were considered within the Council’s project budget.
Resolved unanimously to accept the revised quotation from Fenland Leisure Products to replace the roundabout and log world units. The site will be assessed near the Pavilion.

31/12 REQUEST OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION - None

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

Signed (Chairman) Date