

**MINUTES of a meeting of Little Downham Parish Council held in the Village Hall,
Main Street, Little Downham, on Thursday, 10 April 2014 commencing at 7.00pm.**

Councillors present: MM Oldfield, in the chair, and CM Frankland, GF Frankland, CE Hall, LEA Joel, RS Martin, BL Taylor, GH Taylor and KO Winters. **Clerk:** Mrs J Wardle

Other attendees: None

164/13 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – Cllrs DA Adams-Payne and BGF Smith (at Parish Review rehearsals), District Cllr A Bailey and County Cllr P Read.

165/13 **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

1. **Cllr RS Martin** declared a prejudicial interest in items 171/13.1.4 and 1.5 (Applications 14/00261/FUL and 14/00262/LBC) because he is tenant of part property and owner of adjoining land (Declaration 006-2014).

2. **Cllr LEA Joel** – Declaration 007-2014 (see item 171/13.1.6 below).

166/13 **PUBLIC FORUM** – No comments

167/13 **DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS** (Dist. Cllrs A Bailey & A Goodge) – No reports

168/13 **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT** (County Cllr P Read)

Cllr Read had given apologies because he was not well. It was noted that Cllr Read had recently resigned as a member of ECDC Conservative Party due to matters at ECDC and was now an Independent District Councillor. This does not affect his role as County representative for the Parish.

169/13 **TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

1. **Resolved** that the minutes of 13 March 2014 were correct and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

170/13 **MATTERS TO REPORT**

1. **External Audit** – The Annual Return must be sent to Littlejohn LLP by 09/06/14. In accordance with legislation, notices regarding inspection of accounts have been put on Council Notice boards

2. **(Min.114/13.4) Little Downham Recreation Area Hedge** – It was noted that Mr Runciman had cut back his tree and hedgerow in LD Recreation area. The Clerk will send a letter of thanks.

3. **(Min.156/13.4) Ely Soham Dial-a-Ride** – Funding cuts update letter from Gillian Leeper (ESDAR CEO). The Clerk confirmed that Gillian is able to attend the Annual Parish Meeting on 2nd May.

4. **(Min.157/13.6) Dog waste bins** – Wybone Ltd WDB/LU60 bin was discontinued mid March and will not be manufactured again. The next WDB/LU bin available is 56 ltrs in capacity, but the measurements appear to be smaller than the existing bins. It was suggested that the Clerk look at websites such as Keep Britain Tidy, Dog Trust or RSPCA for information on dog bins.

5. **(Min.129.13) Pavilion grant application** – The Clerk reported that the application had not been submitted to Big Lottery yet because the form was changed last August and around half the questions require a different answer. Cllr Oldfield is reviewing the new form.

6. **(Min.159.13) Downham Recreation Area Ditch** – The Clerk is waiting for a quote from Mr Freeman. Littleport & Downham Internal Drainage Board will quote an hourly rate + rate for tractor and driver.

171/13 **PLANNING MATTERS**

1. **Planning correspondence -**

1.1 **14/00151/FUL** Paragon Holdings, 11 Black Bank Road, Lt Downham – Detached single storey building to provide 5 new small B1 business units - **Resolved** that the Parish Council had concerns regarding the application because it believed the site requires a change of use. It would also like to know if the excessive number of shipping containers on the remainder of the site have planning permission, as it believed they do not and should have been removed some years ago.

- 1.2 **14/00202/FUL** Mr & Mrs S Bradley, Hythe Barn, The Hythe, Lt Downham – Erection of single storey detached annexe - **Resolved that the Parish Council had no concerns.**
- 1.3 **14/00223/FUL** Mr R Bingham, Land adjacent to 9 Third Drove, Lt Downham – Construction of Hay Store - **Resolved that the Parish Council had no concerns.**

7.36pm Cllr RS Martin left the meeting having declared prejudicial interests in the following two items.

- 1.4 **14/00261/FUL** Mr & Mrs H Martin, 35 Ely Road, Lt Downham - Construction of 2 new dwellings and associated equestrian facilities, incorporating the conversion of a redundant listed tower mill to residential use - **Resolved that the Parish Council had no concerns.**
- 1.5 **14/00262/LBC** Mr & Mrs H Martin, 35 Ely Road, Lt Downham - Conversion and extension to tower mill to form dwelling - **Resolved that the Parish Council had no concerns.**

7.43pm Cllr RS Martin was invited back into the meeting.

Cllr LEA Joel declared a personal interest in item 171/13.1.6 (Applications 14/00346/FUL) because she sometimes works with the applicant (Declaration 007-2014).

- 1.6 **14/00346/FUL** Mr M Blakey, Land Floods, Cophall Drove, Lt Downham - Construction of single storey extension to side and rear - **Resolved that the Parish Council had no concerns.**
- 1.7 **14/00281/AGN** Mr G Marshall, Mount Pleasant Farm, 66-68 Main Street, Pymoor – Portal Frame hay barn - **Resolved that the Parish Council had no comments.**
- 1.8 **14/00298/FUL** Mr Kevin Daily, 11 Tower Road, Lt Downham – Convert existing dwelling into two dwellings - **Resolved that the Parish Council had no concerns.**

172/13 **FINANCE**

1. **Monthly Internal Audit** was carried out by Cllrs LEA Joel and G Taylor.
2. **To review E-on utility contract and direct debit for Lt Downham Recreation Area** – Various tariffs for E-on and EDF were considered. EDF offered 7% discount on monthly direct debits. **Resolved unanimously to terminate the Recreation Area Electricity contract with E-on, approve a one-year tariff with EDF that expires September 2015 and change quarterly direct debit to a monthly direct debit.**
3. **Lt Downham Youth Group – request funding towards Summer Activities** – Carol Hebbard wrote to inform of proposed summer activities and request funding towards the hire of skate board ramps for a day and evening during the summer holidays. The normal skate park is £555 and a half pipe (as requested by the youths) is £555. She is also applying to the Downham Feoffees Charity and local businesses for funding support. **Resolved unanimously to pledge £500 towards Youth Group summer activities and request a report of the events with statistics.**
4. **To approve bills and other items for payment** - Items for payment were proposed by Cllr LEA Joel and seconded by Cllr GH Taylor. **Resolved unanimously to approve list of BACS payments 168 to 178 for the total sum of £6414.15.**

173/13 **PARISH LAND AND ASSETS**

1. **Vandalism in Pingle Wood** – It was reported that during the past six months, youths have had campfires in the Cartshed, removed saplings, tree protectors and base matting, damaged roof tiles and kicked footballs in Pingle Wood. Incidents have been reported to the police and crime numbers given where damaged has occurred. The Conservation Group is concerned with the rise in incidents in the Local Nature Reserve and is acting on police advice to question anyone causing anti-social behaviour. The Council expressed support to the Conservation Group.

174/13 **PARISH MATTERS**

1. **Buildings of Local Interests – List of items for nominations** – During the year, a list thirteen items were suggested for nomination. The Clerk will complete the required forms and forward to ECDC for consideration by 2 May nomination deadline date.

2. **Parish Welcome Booklet – to review proposed format and approve front cover** – The Clerk provided examples of welcome booklets from other parish councils and an A5 booklet that she previously produced in 2006. The 2006 A5 format was preferred. It was agreed that the front cover of Lt Downham and Pymoor Village signs would be best printed professionally on shiny paper. **Resolved unanimously to approve the A5 Welcome Booklet format and authorise the Clerk to arrange printing of the front cover with a printing company.**
3. **Concerns re risk of flooding in the Parish** – The Chairman requested members to put their flooding comments and concerns on paper in order that they could be used to draft a letter of concerns to send to relevant authorities and ministers requesting they put pressure on the Government for funding to dredge the South Level Barrier Bank. The draft letter will be considered at the next general meeting.

175/13 HIGHWAYS, PARISH PATHS & BYWAYS

1. **Replies re matters reported from previous meetings:**
 - 1.1 **Pymoor Lane, Dunkirk, Second, Third and Fourth Drove** – Grips have been ordered.
 - 1.2 **Beild Drove, Lt Downham** – An order has been placed for planings.
2. **To report current matters of concern:**
 - 2.1 **62 Ely Road, Lt Downham** – Hedge is encroaching the footway. Request owner to cut back.
 - 2.2 **Black Bank Road Funding** – No response received from a request at the last Neighbourhood Panel meeting in January. The Clerk will request information from County Highways.
 - 2.3 **Street Light out** – Col. 9, Ely Road, Lt Downham – reported.
 - 2.4 **CCC Highways ‘Drop-In’ session** – CCC Highways is considering to set up ‘drop-in’ sessions in villages. The Council had no objections to a Highways Officer attending a Book Café session. The Clerk will consult the Book Café Manager and reply to CCC Highways.

176/13 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

8.51pm **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 177/13, 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.**

177/13 PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND ASSETS

1. **Lt Downham Play Area – Report damage to play area railing & letter of apology from culprit** – It was reported that a football had hit against a vertical bar of the railings and broke it from its weld. Prior to getting it repaired, two youths pulled the bar up and over the top railing. The bar could not be straightened so it had to be cut and a new one welded in place. Police viewed CCTV footage and following enquiries identified one of the culprits. Under the Restorative Justice System, the youth has sent a letter of apology to the Council. The name was withheld on a need-to-know- basis. The Police informed that as this was a first offence, they will not take further action unless he re-offends, then this act of criminal damage would be taken into consideration. The Council accepted the apology.
2. **Tenders for War Memorial cleaning** – Three quotes were considered from three contractors. **Resolved unanimously to approve the quote from Fairhurst Ward Abbots of £3979 + VAT to clean the War Memorial, re-paint the letters, restore three locations with stone inserts, carve approximately 110 letters of 1939-1945 names in agreed font to face of tiered steps.** The Clerk will apply to the War Memorial Trust for grant funding.

178/13 REQUEST OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION - None.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.12 pm.

Signed (Chairman) Date