

**MINUTES of a meeting of Little Downham Parish Council held in the Village Hall,
Main Street, Little Downham, on Thursday, 11 December 2014 commencing at 7.00pm.**

Councillors present: MM Oldfield, in the chair, and DA Adams-Payne, CM Frankland, GF Frankland, CE Hall, RS Martin, BGF Smith (7.03pm), BL Taylor and GH Taylor. **Clerk:** Mrs J Wardle

Other attendees: Dist. Cllr T Goodge

110/14 **TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** - Cllr LEA Joel, Dist. Cllr A Bailey and County Cllr P Read.

No apologies – Cllr KO Winters.

111/14 **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

1. **Cllr DA Adams-Payne** declared a personal interest in item 119/14.1 (Fete Committee and the Brownies and Guides storage container request) because she is on the Fete Committee (Declaration 020-2014).
2. **Cllr MM Oldfield** declared a personal interest in item 119/14.1 (Fete Committee and the Brownies and Guides storage container request) because she is on the Fete Committee (Declaration 021-2014).

112/14 **PUBLIC FORUM** - No comments

113/14 **DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS (Dist. Cllrs A Bailey & A Goodge)**

1. Dist Cllr Goodge updated the Council informing that he is a member of the ECDC Asset Sub Committee that is looking for funding of £2.5 million for the new leisure centre, the Commercial Services Committee and the Planning Committee. He recently attended the Littleport & Downham Internal Drainage Board meeting and informed that the government had pledged funding to reduce flooding and raise the Welney Causeway.

7.15pm Dist. Cllr Goodge left the meeting.

114/14 **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT (County Cllr P Read)** – No report

115/14 **TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

1. **Resolved** that the minutes of 13 November 2014 were correct and signed by the Chairman as a true record following the deletion of *handyman* and insertion of *Book Café Manager* on line 11 of item 108/14.2.

116/14 **MATTERS TO REPORT**

1. **(Min.99/14.1) Little Downham War Memorial** – Cllr Smith requested 30 cubic metres (1/2 tonne bag) of gravel to be delivered to the churchyard for the trench.
2. **(Min.99/14.5) Dog Waste Bins** – New bins and appropriate fixing kits are on order.
3. **(Min.99/14.6) Lt Downham Recreation Area Goal posts** – Little Downham United has repaired the goal post and obsolete metal has been removed from the area by the handyman.
4. **(Min.99/14.7) Rural Payments Agency Single Payment Scheme (SPS) 2015** – The Council is able to claim for Myles Meadow if it is transferred to the Council's list. Mr Martin is required to transfer the land entitlement back to the Council using a RLE1 form. The Council can then include it in its Basic Payment Scheme application that must be submitted by 15 May 2015.
5. **(Min.103/14) Consultation on Electoral Review of Cambridgeshire County Divisions & presentation meeting invitations** – Due to their absences at the meeting, no reports were received from Cllrs LEA Joel or KO Winters.
6. **(Min.107/14) All Weather Court, Lt Downham** – Artificial Grass Cambridge Ltd had sprayed the court with an algae and moss killer chemical on 03/12/14. They will clean out the detritus and infill with sand on 15/12/14.

7. **(Min.105/14) CAPALC AGM 20/11/14** - Cllr Oldfield gave a report of the CAPALC AGM that she and the Clerk attended. A main item considered was the amount of time CAPALC had given to a few councils with issues, which resulted in other councils not receiving value for money from their annual subscription. It was proposed that a short amount of time be given under a fairer Association Fee Structure and if additional time is required, this is paid for on an hourly basis. Member council representatives present at the meeting voted in favour of the Association fee being based on the square root of individual councils' electorate. However, it was noted that the new fee structure would result in a reduced payment for many Councils but increased payments for some very small and some larger councils. It was therefore approved to a 40% change in 2015/16 and the new full structure fee being implemented in 2016/17. Because of the change of Association fees, no CAPALC budget was presented for approval at the meeting. Graham Redman (CAPALC's new treasurer) had waited for members to decide on the fee structure so he could prepare the budget in accordance with the expected income. He will produce the 2015/16 budget and forward to all member councils in due course. There was no clarification or confirmation of how CAPALC would assist Councils with issues or what additional charges would apply.
8. **Downham Conservation Group free trees** – It was reported that the Parish Conservation Group had received 20 free trees from The Conservation Volunteers in association with DEFRA's Big Tree Plant. The trees were planted on 06/12/14 in the Local Nature Reserve.
9. **Little Downham Youth Group** – Cllr Oldfield reported on attending a meeting at Stretham Youth Group regarding the promotion of VOYCES (Voluntary Organisations, Young People & Children, Enabling Strategy). The meeting was to up-date on *changes to youth work in Cambridgeshire and the evidence base for community based approaches and an overview of Stretham's community led youth programme – 'Learning from experience – planning to the future' including a presentation by young people from Stretham Youth Centre*. Carol Hebbard and Jean Gallyer from Little Downham Youth Group also attended. It was reported at the meeting that the Trustees of Community CARTS want to continue with Witchford Village College being involved.
10. **White Container, Lt Downham Recreation Area** – The Clerk reported that the white container door was faulty and M Yardy Engineering had tried to repair it but could not. As a matter of public health and safety, they will fabricate a new door @ £190 + VAT and use the existing door fixings.

117/14 **PLANNING MATTERS**

1. **Planning correspondence -**

- 1.1 **14/01200/ADI** Suzuki GB Plc, ALS Autos, Downham Garage, 23A Main Street, Lt Downham – 1 x Internally illuminated Aluminium Fascia, 1 x Internally illuminated Entrance Statement, 1 x Internally illuminated Totem – **Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns.**
- 1.2 **14/00775/FUL** Mr & Mrs Rutterford, 23 Eagles Lane, Lt Downham – Proposed two storey side extension and alterations to existing dwelling – Amendment – The reduction in the size of the side extension and changes to the design of the rear elevation – **Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns.**

For information only:

- 1.3 **ECDC: Applications approved:** 14/00863/FUL, 14/01062/FUL, 14/01063/LBC, 14/01068/FUL

118/14 **FINANCE**

1. Monthly Internal Audit was carried out by Cllrs GF Frankland and MM Oldfield.
2. **To review budget proposals 2015/16 (Min.101/14.2.1)** – A copy of the Cemetery Committee's last Annual Accounts and current receipts and payments were viewed in relation to the proposed budget. It was proposed by Cllr GH Taylor and seconded by Cllr GF Frankland that the budget allocation should remain @ £4000 for 2015/16. A vote result was 7 in favour and 2 abstentions. **Resolved to approve the 2015/16 allocated budget proposal of £4000 for the Cemetery Committee's expenses.**
3. **To approve BT Telephone Business Plan (Min.101/14.2.1)** – The Clerk reported that the BT Business Plan tariff was the same as the previous one. **Resolved unanimously to approve a new 24 months BT Business Plan contract with the same Nominated Committed Spend of £200 per annum and expiry of October 2016.**

4. **To consider subscription to CAPALC for 2015/16 (Min.116/14.7)** – The Council noted that the new Association fee structure would result in a reduced payment but was concerned that no details were given about additional charges or the budget proposal for 2015/16. The Council felt that CAPALC should reassess and confirm what it will provide for Council members.
Resolved unanimously to approve membership of CAPALC for 2015/16 on the proviso that the Council is happy with the 2015/16 budget proposals and additional charges yet to be received from CAPALC.
5. **To approve bills and other items for payment** - Items presented for payment were proposed by Cllr GF Frankland and seconded by Cllr MM Oldfield.
Resolved unanimously to approve list of payments for cheque no. 001054, Direct Debits and BACS payments 255 to 270 for the total sum of £9827.24.

119/14 **PARISH MATTERS**

1. **To approve and sign Cambridgeshire Libraries Service Level Agreement for the Book Café** – Members received copies of the document with their agenda. It was noted that the Book Café Committee had approved the agreement and Book Café Business Plan on 19/11/14.
Resolved unanimously to approve the Cambridgeshire Libraries Service Level Agreement for the Little Downham Book Café 2014/16, which included the Little Downham Book Café Business Plan 2014/16. The Chairman signed the Service Level Agreement.
2. **Book Café Committee – Proposed amendments to the Constitution and Rules** – Due to changes relating to the new Book Cafe Manager, the Committee unanimously decided to review its Constitution and Rules. The Council discussed and approved the proposed amendments. It was noted there was no stipulation to the number of general meetings to be held during the year.
Resolved unanimously to approve the proposed amendments and propose an additional sub-clause in Clause 8 stating that a minimum of three (3) general meetings shall be held per year.
The Council's proposed amendment will be included in the final draft Constitution document for adoption by the Book Café Committee at its meeting on 11/02/15 following the 30 days' notice stipulated in Clause 13. Clause numbers will be revised accordingly in the final draft document.
3. **To approve co-option of Graham Hayter-Smith as Village Hall Representative and a non-voting associate of the Book Café Committee** – Currently there is no reference to co-option of members to the Book Café Committee. In accordance with Clause 13, the Book Café Committee must therefore request approval of the co-option from the Council. Graham Hayter-Smith had volunteered to be the Book Café Committee's representative because no one on the Committee was available to do it and he attends the meetings in his capacity of Village Hall Bursar. His role on the Book Café Committee would be defined in the proposed amended Clause 7.4.
Resolved unanimously to approve the co-option of Graham Hayter-Smith as the Book Café Committee Village Hall Representative and a non-voting associate of the Book Café Committee.
4. **Fete Committee and Guides & Brownies - Request to site a container at Little Downham Recreation Area** – The Girl Guides cannot put a container on the Feoffees land behind the Village Hall because there are plans for it to be developed. The Fete Committee, Brownies and Guides are proposing to share the cost of a new container and request permission from the Council for it to be sited in the recreation area. It was suggested that the new container could be positioned near to the green container and painted green to match. The Clerk will enquire about planning permission for the new container.
Resolved unanimously to approve permission for a new container to be sited adjacent to the green container in the Little Downham Recreation Area subject to planning permission being obtained if required.

120/14 **HIGHWAYS, PARISH PATHS & BYWAYS**

1. **Replies re matters reported from previous meetings:**
 - 1.1 **Ely Road Speed Limit (Min.104/14.2.1)** – The Clerk was awaiting a reply from Ross Hamilton following a request for repeater signs.
 - 1.2 **Pond Lane, Lt Downham (Min.104/14.2.3)** – The handyman has trimmed the base of the tree.
 - 1.3 **Various street/direction signs (Min.104/14.2.5)** – The handyman has cleaned the signs of concern.

- 1.4 **Royal Mail King George VI post box (Min.104/14.2.6)** – Jonathan Clements (Royal Mail Project Manager – Churn) confirmed he could arrange for the old post box to be painted but it is likely to be black, as a box that is out of service. They would not paint it red because it confuses people. He will also find out from their contractor if the box is on the list for on-going maintenance to make sure it does not fall into disrepair again.
2. **To report current matters of concern:**
- 2.1 **BT Phone Box, Main Street, Lt Downham** – The Clerk was instructed to enquire about the current use and preservation of the phone box.
- 2.2 **Coffue Drove, Lt Downham** – It was requested that the bridges be added to the ECDC list of Buildings and Landscapes of Interest (BLINTS).
- 2.3 **Downham Road B1411** – The cleaning of gulleys and new grips are needed along the highway verge to allow water to drain from the carriageway between Allotment Farm and Ely Tool Centre.
- 2.4 **Black Bank Road, Lt Downham** - The edge of the carriageway from No. 2A to Woodfen Lodge is crumbling and needs looking at as soon as possible.
- 2.5 **No. 1 Main Street, Pymoor** – Concern was expressed regarding the lack of visibility to traffic from the left when waiting at the Pymoor Lane junction to cross over to School Lane or turn right onto Straight Furlong. It was reported that there had been some ‘close calls’ of cars colliding. The Clerk informed that CCC Highways had no objection to the erection of the new fence but mentioned that it could require planning permission. The Clerk was instructed to make enquiries with ECDC about the height of the fence.
- 2.6 **North Fen Drove, Lt Downham** – Thanks were expressed for good work on the carriageway.
3. **Parish Paths & Byways**
- 3.1 **Clayway Lane (Byway 49) – to approve proposed Community Maintenance Project (Min.104/14.3.1)** – CCC Rights of Way informed that the Parish Council will lead on this project with the proposed contractor. It is required to pay the full cost of the project, but with grant funding, it will only actually pay for the work carried out on Myles Meadow hedge. All other work proposed on the Byway will be funded by the Community Maintenance Project grant of £2525 and VAT claimed back in the normal way. No work will be carried out on the adjacent ‘IDB’ ditch. The Council can notify neighbouring landowners of the work taking place. It will be for the landowners to request an independent quote for work on their hedges if they wish. CCC Rights of Way obtained the quote from an approved contractor who had carried out the same work at Thistle Corner, Ely. Members agreed it was a good opportunity to improve the LNR access link from Myles Meadow to The Holts.
Resolved unanimously to approve the quote of £2975 + VAT from Fordham Landscapes for the proposed work on Myles Meadow hedge (£450 + VAT) and Byway 49 (£2525 + VAT) and to accept the CCC Community Maintenance Project Grant of £2525 (confirmation received).

121/14 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

9.05pm 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 122/14 & 123/14, 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.

122/14 **PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND ASSETS**

1. **To review Grazing Agreements for 2015 Grazing season:**

1.1 **Myles Meadow** – The terms of the agreement were reviewed and minor amendments made.

1.2 **Holts Meadow** – The terms of the agreement were reviewed and minor amendments made.

Resolved unanimously to approve the revised terms of agreement.

2. **Cemetery update** – It was reported that due to personal reasons, Rev. Margaret Talbot had recently resigned from St Leonard's Church. The Clerk confirmed that Rev. Talbot had not replied to the Council's letter accepting her offer to negotiate the purchase of Church land at Cowbridge Hall Road. The Clerk was instructed to write to The Churchwardens and enclose a copy of all correspondence to and from Rev. Talbot. A reply is requested by early January 2015.

123/14 **HUMAN RESOURCES**

1. **To receive the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) 2014-2016 National Salary Award** – All members were given a copy of the document with their agenda.
Resolved unanimously to accept the 2014-2016 NJC National Salary Award and implement as instructed with effect from 01/01/15.

2. **To approve Clerk's salary and new NJC 2014-2016 pay scale** – Mrs Wardle's salary will increase in accordance with Annexe 1 of the new pay scale and under the terms of the her contract with effect from January 2015. In addition, in accordance with Annexe 2, Mrs Wardle qualifies for the pro rata non-consolidated payment of £100 in her December 2014 salary and a pro rata payment of £39 in her April 2015 salary.

Resolved unanimously to increase the Clerk's salary in accordance with Annexe 1 of the 2014-2016 NJC National Salary Award and, in addition, include the pro rata non-consolidated payments in her December 2014 and April 2015 salaries respectively as instructed in Annexe 2.

124/14 REQUEST OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

1. New lighting for All Weather Court

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.40 pm.

Members were invited to stay for mince pies, chocolate truffles and mulled wine provided by the Chairman and the Clerk.

Signed (Chairman) Date