

**MINUTES of a meeting of Little Downham Parish Council held in the Village Hall,  
Main Street, Little Downham, on Thursday, 14 January 2010 commencing at 7.00pm.**

**Councillors present:** CM Frankland, in the chair, CE Hall, RS Martin, BL Taylor, AJ White and KO Winters.

**In attendance:** Katie Child (ECDC Forward Planning Officer), Sadia Moeed (Environment Agency Projects Manager) (7.10pm), Adam Ireland (Environment Agency Principle Planning Officer), PC K Humble, Dist. Cllr A Bailey, County Cllr P Read and four parishioners.

**Opening remarks** – Cllr Frankland opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

**APOLOGIES** - Received from Cllr DA Adams-Payne, EW Hall, M Oldfield and RC Stacey, Dist. Cllr T Goodge and PCSO J Hall. Cllr DJ Badcock sent apologies that he would be late, but did not arrive.

In the absence of the Chairman and the Vice Chairman, it was necessary for the Council to elect a Chairman. It was proposed by Cllr CE Hall, seconded by Cllr RS Martin and agreed unanimously.

**Resolved:** To appoint Cllr CM Frankland as Chairman for the meeting. Cllr Frankland accepted.

**156/09 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

1. Cllr BL Taylor declared a prejudicial interest in item 164/09.1.1 (Application 09/00987/CLP) because he owns adjoining property. (Declaration no. 001-2010).

**157/09 EAST CAMBS LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – CORE STRATEGY FLOOD RISK CONCERNS**

1. Katie Child and Adam Ireland were introduced and briefly explained the Core Strategy and flood risk considerations. The meeting was interrupted when Cllr Winters placed a recording device on the table. He was reminded that he could not record Council meetings. He stated that the device was not switched on but thought the meeting had been adjourned. It was confirmed that the meeting had not been adjourned.

7.10pm Sadia Moeed arrived and apologised for being late. The Chairman welcomed Ms Moeed and continued the meeting with questions from members. The questions and answers are recorded as notes to the meeting. After the questions, the Chairman invited Sadia Moeed to speak. She briefly commented on the Environment Agency's Great Tidal Ouse Strategy in reply to the comments that the Council had expressed in its response to the consultation.

7.35pm Katie Child and Adam Ireland were thanked for attending and left the meeting.

**158/09 TO ADJOURN MEETING FOR PUBLIC FORUM**

7.35pm Meeting adjourned. County Cllr Read expressed concerns regarding the Old Bedford River and recommended that the Environment Agency works with the Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs). Ms Moeed confirmed that colleagues have regular meetings with the IDBs.

7.45pm The meeting reconvened. Ms Moeed was thanked for attending and left the meeting.

**159/09 PARISH CRIME MATTERS**

1. **Police Crime Reports** – Five crimes were reported in Lt Downham and two in Pymoor between 25/11/09 – 13/01/10. All crimes were reported in January. December was crime free.
2. **To report recent events** – Pc Humble informed that a person from this area was apprehended and charged in December for burglary elsewhere. There is a chance that he may be the person responsible for some burglaries in Little Downham. This will be investigated further.

**160/09 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS** (Dist. Cllrs A Bailey & A Goodge)

1. Dist. Cllr Bailey informed that ECDC has produced its budget proposals for 2010/11. It will not receive as much funding as expected from central government, and, with the reduction of income from planning applications and lower interest rates, it has some hard decisions to make to reduce its expenditure. She encouraged members to attend the Neighbourhood Panel meeting 25/01/10.

**161/09 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT** (County Cllr P Read)

1. County Cllr Read reported that he had written to the Environment Agency regarding the proposed Strategy, his involvement in 1980-90 with the Great Ouse River Board to discuss maintenance over the next 20-30 years and expressed a preference that work in the fens should be kept on a local level under the authority of the Internal Drainage Boards. His colleague attends the East Cambs Liaison Meetings and can pass on concerns.

7.50pm Dist. Cllr Bailey and County Cllr Read left the meeting.

162/09 **TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

1. **Resolved:** The minutes of 15 December 2009 (Full Council) were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

163/09 **MATTERS TO REPORT**

1. (Min.152/09.2.1) **Complaint to Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) East Highways Division** – No reply has been received yet.
2. (Min.152/09.2.3) **Request to CCC for additional funding for fen roads** – No reply yet.
3. (Min.152/09.3) **Cambridgeshire Advisory Freight Map Consultation** – The Council's objection has been sent, however it was mentioned in local media before Christmas that the A1123 had been changed back to a strategic route.
4. (Min.154/09) **Youth Shelter for Lt Downham Recreation Area** – Queensbury cannot provide seating on three sides. The wooden perch seating proposed is 195mm wide.
5. (Min.139/09.3) **Chambers Way refuse collections** – A reply was received today from David Archer (ECDC Executive Director, Planning Service). He informed that Veolia will not use roads that have not been adopted and ECDC tries to seek refuse bin stores on all sites, but this is not necessarily achievable. The Council requested to discuss the issue again at the next meeting.

164/09 **PLANNING MATTERS**

1. **To consider planning applications received:**  
8.05pm Cllr Taylor left the meeting prior to the next being discussed.

- 1.1 **09/00987/CLP**, Mr R Widdowson, 68 Ely Road, Little Downham - Timber garden shed –  
**Resolved:** The Parish Council had no concerns.

8.11pm Two parishioners left. Cllr Taylor was invited back to the meeting.

2. **Request to discuss East Cambs Planning Committee, in relation to planning application 09/00695/VAR, and to propose writing a letter of complaint as it is considered to be working outside its remit and is undemocratic (Cllr KO Winter)** – Following a discussion on the matter, Cllr Winters handed the Chairman his proposal and requested that it be read out. Cllr KO Winters proposed and Cllr BL Taylor seconded the following proposal:

*I propose we write a letter of complaint to the chairman of the full district council, saying that the planning committee is working outside its remit and is therefore undemocratic.*

*The planning committee passed the application providing the environment agency dropped or altered their objections.*

*This meant that the planning committee would give permission for a gypsy site to be placed on a flood plain.*

*The full committee adopted the amendments of the Inspector – Mary Travers, regarding East Cambs Core Strategy (page 29 – issue 9 para 3.112), yet the planning committee are not adhering to it.*

*The current action proposed by the planning committee is in total contradiction to O.D.P.M. circular 2006.*

*Therefore can the chairman of the full district council investigate the situation and report back to Lt Downham parish council.*

*We find East Cambs planning committee to be undemocratic and they are not consistent. The planning committee are still carrying on with H.5 and the inspector proposed it should be deleted. This is totally unacceptable and undemocratic. \**

(\* At Cllr Winters' request the proposal has been typed exactly as written)

A recorded vote was requested and the result was as follows: In favour – Cllrs KO Winters & BL Taylor. Against – CM Frankland, CE Hall, RS Martin and A White.

**Resolved:** Not to write a letter of complaint to East Cambs District Council regarding the Planning Committee's decision in relation to application 09/00695/VAR.

3. **For information only:**  
ECDC Applications approved: 09/00870/FUL

- 165/09 **FINANCE**
1. **Monthly Internal Audit** was carried out by Cllrs RS Martin and AJ White.
  2. **To approve the purchase of new accounts software *Scribe 2000*** – The software is licensed annually in May. An additional three months is purchased for the first year in order to set up account headings ready for use in April 2010. Licence fee covers all upgrades and support. Proposed by Cllr CE Hall, seconded Cllr RS Martin and agreed unanimously.  
**Resolved: to authorise the purchase of *Scribe 2000* at an initial cost of £306.25 + VAT.**
  3. **To set Precept for the financial year ending 31 March 2011** – Proposed by Cllr KO Winters, seconded by Cllr CE Hall and agreed unanimously.  
**Resolved: to set the Parish Council Precept for 2010/11 at £72,342.00.**
  4. **To consider continuation of Parish Council Street Light Maintenance & Energy through CCC** – The annual charge covers the maintenance and energy of 7 Parish Council lamps for 2010/11. Proposed by Cllr KO Winters, seconded Cllr BL Taylor and agreed unanimously.  
**Resolved: To continue the Cambridgeshire County Council Street Light Maintenance and Energy Agreement for 2010/11.**
  5. **To approve bills and other items for payment**  
Proposed by Cllr RS Martin, seconded Cllr AJ White and agreed unanimously.  
**Resolved: To approve list of payments for cheque numbers 000640 to 000646 and direct debits for the total sum of £2552.57.**

8.35pm One parishioner left.

- 166/09 **COUNCILLORS & STAFF**
1. **Parish Council Code of Conduct Training 2010 – Invitation to attend free training session with Littleport Parish Council at The Barn, Littleport – dates to be approved** – 24<sup>th</sup> March was preferred. The Clerk will notify ECDC.

- 167/09 **PARISH MATTERS**
1. **Neighbourhood Panel Meeting (at 7pm on 25 January at Lt Thetford Village Hall) – to consider issues for the Council representative to report** – It was agreed that Cllr Winters should express concerns regarding burglaries in the parish and flytipping at High Road, Broadall Bridge, Hundred Foot Bank and Head Fen.
  2. **Mr P Wright – request for gritting facilities and sand bins on Second Drove, Lt Downham** – The Council agreed it could not afford to provide bins for Second Drove because it would set a precedent for all other roads in the parish that are not gritted. The Clerk will reply to Mr Wright.

- 168/09 **PARISH PATHS**
1. **CCC Ms K Whymark (P3 officer) – Complaint received re Byway 39 (Downham Hythe, Lt Downham)** – Cllr Taylor offered to approach the local farmer to request he levels the Byway; if not, he and Cllr Winters will do it. Cllr Winters will contact Ms Whymark to inform her of their proposal.

- 169/09 **RECREATION AREAS**
1. **To update on Pymoor Play Pathfinder Project** – CCC requires a redesign of the play area based on the results of the children's surveys. It was assumed Cllr Stacey is dealing with this.
  2. **To consider replacing black floor covering in Little Downham Pavilion** – The Clerk was authorised to seek costs to replace the flooring in the front changing rooms. It was reported the Lt Downham Youth Group is applying for a grant for the pavilion that will include replacing the heaters, provide more electrical sockets, front and rear outdoor lights for use in Youth Group sessions, an inset front door mat and to redecorate in approved colours. The Council was in support of the application.

- 170/09 **PRESERVATION AREAS**
1. **To consider advertising for grazing of Myles Meadow and Holts Meadows for 2010 season** – It was agreed for the adverts to be placed in the parish magazine and notice boards.

- 171/09 **HIGHWAYS**
1. **Replies re matters reported from previous meetings:**
    - 1.1 **Townsend, Lt Downham** – Investigations by Anglian Water to discover the source of the water leak is still ongoing. CCC Highways has expressed both its concerns and the Parish Council's regarding the water freezing and asked what preventative measures are being taken.

**2. To report current matters of concern:**

- 2.1 Main Drove, Lt Downham** – Potholes need filling at Head Fen between Carlisle Farm and Dexter’s Bridge.
- 2.2 Main Street, Lt Downham** – Request a progress report and inform that the coloured surfacing is uplifting.
- 2.3 Martins Lane, Lt Downham** – Street light out, 1<sup>st</sup> left from Main Street.

**172/09 CORRESPONDENCE**

**1. For information only:**

**ECDC Tree works** – The Rectory, Main Street, Lt Downham – Crown lift and thinning of Oak, Lime and Sycamore trees and felling of Horse Chestnut.

**173/09 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC & 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 174/09, Tenders, 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.**

9.13pm One parishioner left.

**174/09 TENDERS**

- 1. Grass Cutting for 2010 season** – Three tenders were received and considered by the Council. It was agreed to amend the specification in that only four cuts are required at Holts Meadow during the season and not eight.

**Resolved: To accept the tender from Truelink Ltd for the grass cutting contract as listed in the Yearly Parish Maintenance Specifications 2010, including amendment to Holts Meadow, and Additional Parish Maintenance Specifications.**

- 2. Tree works at Straight Furlong, Pymoor** – Five tenders were received and considered by the Council. The handyman will be on hand to supervise the work.

**Resolved: To accept the tender from A & B Landscaping, Newmarket, for the tree works as specified in the Straight Furlong Specifications Dec 2009.**

**175/09 REQUEST OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION** – Chambers Way refuse collections.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.30pm.

Signed ..... (Chairman) Date .....