

**MINUTES of a meeting of Little Downham Parish Council held in the Village Hall,
Main Street, Little Downham, on Thursday, 16 February 2012 commencing at 7.00pm.**

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

In attendance: Dist. Cllr T Goodge and four parishioners.

165/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Cllr NK Missin, Dist. Cllr A Bailey and County Cllr P Read.

166/11 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. **Cllr RS Martin** declared a prejudicial interest in item 174/11.2.1 (New cemetery land offer) because he is an owner, Trustee owner and tenant of adjoining land and Superintendent of the current cemetery (Declaration 001-2012).
2. **Cllr MM Oldfield** declared a personal interest in item 172/11.1.4 (application 12/00089/FUL) because she is a neighbour and lives opposite at No. 12 (Declaration 002-2012).
3. **Cllr BL Taylor** declared prejudicial interests in item 172/11.1.1 (application 11/01035/FUL) because the applicant is his son, and item 174/11.2.1 (New cemetery land offer) because the offer to the Council is of his land (Declaration 003-2012).
4. **Cllr GH Taylor** declared prejudicial interests in item 172/11.1.1 (application 11/01035/FUL) because the applicant is her son, and item 174/11.2.1 (New cemetery land offer) because the offer to the Council is of her land (Declaration 004-2012).

167/11 PUBLIC FORUM

Mrs M Edwards expressed objections regarding item 172/11.1.2. The Council noted her comments for later in the meeting. Mr Edwards expressed concern regarding funeral vehicles that park outside St Leonard's Church on the yellow lines and cause an obstruction. The Clerk will forward the concern to the police or CCC Highways. Mr Jordan agreed with Mrs Edward's concerns regarding item 172/11.1.2.

7.12pm Two parishioners left the meeting.

168/11 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS (Dist. Cllrs A Bailey & A Goodge)

1. Dist. Cllr Goodge had nothing to report to the Council, but noted the parishioners' comments.

169/11 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT (County Cllr P Read)

1. In his absence, County Cllr Read provided a report, which the Chairman read out. In summary, he has attended meetings to discuss budgets for highways and planning and Adult and Wellbeing. The County and District Council's budgets will have to increase this year but, fortunately, the Council Tax in this area is comparatively low compared to most other authorities.

170/11 TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. It was noticed that Council's planning comment for item 157/11.1.1 was not complete. The Clerk apologised for the omission. It was agreed that the minutes should be amended, copies issued to all councillors and put on the website as soon as possible.
Resolved that the minutes of 19 January 2012 (Full Council) be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record following the insertion of the Council's comment for item 157/11.1.1 (planning application 11/01077/OUM).

171/11 MATTERS TO REPORT

1. **(Min.158/11.2 E-On (Electricity) - Pavilion Utility Contract Review** – The Clerk had managed to re-negotiate the annual contract with E-On and achieved a 46% reduction on the proposed standing charge and approximately 6.7% reduction on the day, nights, evening and weekend units for period 05/05/12 - 04/05/13.
2. **(Min.156/11.4) Downham Parish Conservation Group** – The Conservation Group's AGM is to be held in March. It was agreed to express thanks to the members for their continued voluntary work in the Local Nature Reserve and Community Orchard on behalf of the Parish.
3. **Insurance for unoccupied buildings in freezing weather** – Following an email from Came & Co (Insurance Brokers) regarding cover for burst pipes in unoccupied buildings, such as sports pavilion, the Clerk informed that the handyman has lagged all the pipes in the Pavilion.
4. **(Min.156/11.2) Pymoor Recreation Field** – The damaged concrete post is still in place and upright because the steel rods in the post were not severed. The handyman will assess all posts.

172/11 PLANNING MATTERS

1. Planning correspondence -

7.25pm Prior to the next item being discussed, Cllrs B & G Taylor left the meeting.

1.1 **11/01035/FUL** Mr R Taylor, 1 Mount Pleasant Farm Cottages, 66 - 68 Main Street, Pymoor - Extensions to front and rear – Amendment – The change of roof design – **Resolved that the Parish Council had no concerns.**

7.30pm Cllrs B & G Taylor were invited back to the meeting.

1.2 **11/01099/FUL** Deanta UK Ltd, North West of 3 to 5 Straight Furlong, Pymoor – Addition of B8 storage and distribution shed (720m²). It was noted that the application had been re-submitted because it had addressed previous highways and drainage issues. The Council considered the parishioners' concerns and agreed that its comments relating to the previous application were still relevant. **Resolved that Little Downham Parish Council has concerns about this application and recommends outright refusal of permission for the following reasons:**

1. **The proposal is vast and overbearing and will increase storage capacity and distribution by approximately 126%, which will result in a considerable increase of light and HCV vehicle movements.**
2. **Due to its size, the proposed erection of the additional warehouse near the centre of Pymoor will have a detrimental and visual impact on the street scene and on the village, as well as in the open countryside from the rear of the property. It is therefore contrary to PPS 7, para. 1 (ii), (iii), (iv) (vi) and Para. 12;**
3. **The proposed 'shed' description is misleading and should be more accurately defined as a warehouse because it is to be used for storage and distribution. Based on the plan measurements (27439 x 27572), the warehouse will be equal to 756m² externally and of 'double height', which will be more visible than the existing warehouse on site;**
4. **The site is not suitable for the increase of B8 industrial use as proposed because of its location in the middle of a small rural village and residential area. Industrial use of this size should be on industrial sites located on the outskirts of towns and main roads, not in villages.**
5. **Access to the site is not suitable for HCVs, which have caused damage to the surface of Straight Furlong and adjacent kerbs and footway at the entrance of the site. (It has been noticed that images of Straight Furlong and the entrance to the site included in the application have been taken from Google Maps and are dated October 2008 before damage was done)**
6. **Little Downham Parish has a history of HCV problems through the parish. The increases in large vehicle movements will a detrimental effect on the condition of the fen roads and through the villages of Little Downham and Pymoor.**
7. **The local situation is exacerbated by lorry drivers asking residents to move parked cars to allow the HCVs a wide access to the site.**
8. **The Parish Council has heard concerns from local residents who attended the Parish Council meeting. It is understood that the owner of the northern boundary ditch has not been approached regarding surface water discharge into his ditch. Access to it is restricted from the site due to an existing 2m high fence.**

1.3 **12/00061/PDR** Mr & Mrs M Nicholas, The Ashes, 2G Tower Road, Lt Downham – Erection of a shed (retrospective) – **Resolved that the Parish Council had no concerns.**

1.4 **12/00089/FUL** Mr Nick Sampays, 17 Eagles Lane, Lt Downham – Extension over existing garage – **Resolved that the Parish Council had no concerns.**

For information only:

1.5 **ECDC Applications approved:** 11/01082/FUL, 11/01118/AGN (council not consulted)

173/11 FINANCE

1. **Monthly Internal Audit** was carried out by Cllrs GF Frankland and CE Hall.

2. **Pymoor Skate Park:**

2.1 **Letter from Pymoor Skate Park Group to request financial assistance for skate park** – It was noted that the Council had not allocated funds for skate parks in its 2012/13 budget and that the group had stated at a previous meeting it would raise its own funds for the skate park. Following discussion, two proposals were put forward. 1st proposal - Cllr MM Oldfield proposed and Cllr CE Hall seconded that the Council should decline the request because no funding is available to assist with skate parks. 2nd proposal - Cllr KO Winters proposed and Cllr BL Taylor

seconded that £500 should be given to Pymoor Skate Park. **The Council voted on which proposal to consider first. The result of a recorded vote was as follows: To vote on the 1st proposal first: In favour (8) - Cllrs DA Adams-Payne, CM Frankland, GF Frankland, CE Hall, RS Martin, MM Oldfield, BGF Smith and G Taylor. Against (2) - Cllrs BL Taylor and KO Winters. The result of a recorded vote on the 1st proposal: In favour (8) - Cllrs DA Adams-Payne, CM Frankland, GF Frankland, CE Hall, RS Martin, MM Oldfield, BGF Smith and G Taylor. Against (2) - Cllrs BL Taylor and KO Winters.**

Resolved that the Council would not provide financial assistance to Pymoor Skate Park.

- 2.2 Letter from Pymoor Skate Park Group to request support of Section 106 funds for skate park** - A balance of £20,000 of S106 funds for Parish Community & Social infrastructure and open spaces is held by ECDC. Pymoor Skate Park requested support from the Parish Council to apply for £10,000 of the funds. It was considered that the funds could be applied towards the Pavilion extension and new All Weather Court Fence, as well as an application from Little Downham Skate Park. Following discussion, two proposals were put forward. 1st proposal - Cllr MM Oldfield proposed and Cllr RS Martin seconded that the Council should support a Pymoor Skate Park application for £2000 on this occasion. 2nd proposal - Cllr KO Winters proposed and Cllr GH Taylor seconded that the Council should support a Pymoor Skate Park application for £5000 on this occasion. **The Council voted on which proposal to consider first. The result to vote on the 1st proposal first: 6 In favour, 3 Against and 1 abstention. The result of a vote on the 1st proposal was unanimous in favour (10).**

Resolved unanimously to support an application by Pymoor Skate Park to East Cambs District Council for £2000 of Section 106 funding.

- 3. To approve bills and other items for payment** - Proposed Cllr CE Hall and seconded Cllr GF Frankland. **Resolved unanimously to approve list of payments for cheque numbers 000943 to 000950 and direct debits for the total sum of £3535.20.**

174/11 PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND ASSETS

- 1. Pavilion Working Group Update** – Cllr GF Frankland presented final draft plans to the Council for approval, following approval by the Pavilion Working Group. Neil Cutforth (Design Consultant) recommended submitting the plans to ECDC for pre-application planning advice, as this is free for Parish Councils and will allow ECDC to raise concerns regarding the proposals. **Resolved unanimously to approve the final draft plans, for Neil Cutforth to submit the plans for pre-application planning advice and, if no concerns raised, to submit the formal planning application to ECDC.**
- 2. To consider matters relating to the provision of additional burial Land:**
- 2.1 Letter from BL & GH Taylor re New Cemetery – Land Offer** – The Council received a copy of a letter sent to Katie Child (ECDC Forward Planning Officer) from Cllrs BL & GH Taylor offering to donate three acres of their land south of the existing cemetery to the Parish Council for additional burial land, in exchange for a planning gain for houses on the remaining four acres of their field. The Parish Council was asked to consider the offer and, if in agreement, to write to ECDC in support of the proposal. Cllrs B & G Taylor were thanked for putting their offer forward. Before they and Cllr RS Martin left the meeting, it was confirmed by Cllr G Taylor that the offer was conditional on housing gain and not for industrial use, and by Cllr B Taylor that a strip of the remaining field could be used to provide a road to the new burial land from Cowbridge Hall Road.

8.55pm Cllrs RS Martin, BL & GH Taylor left the meeting.

The Council discussed the offer in detail. **The result of a recorded vote for the council to wait until the results of the Burial Land questionnaire are known before making a decision was as follows: In favour (5) - Cllrs DA Adams-Payne, CM Frankland, CE Hall, MM Oldfield and BGF Smith, Against (1) - Cllr KO Winters, Abstention(1) - GF Frankland.**

Resolved not to write to ECDC in support of the proposal but to wait for the Burial Land questionnaire results before making a decision.

9.13pm Cllrs RS Martin, BL & GH Taylor were invited back into the meeting.

9.14pm Cllr KO Winters left the meeting. 9.15pm Cllr Winters returned.

- 2.2 To consider draft Burial Land Questionnaire** – A draft questionnaire was approved. CAPALC had offered to print the questionnaire in colour, approximately 1100. Councillors would be required to deliver the questionnaires to every household in the parish. Parishioners to return forms to the Chairman, the Clerk or in the drop-in boxes at Costcutters, The Convenient Store or Pymoor Social Club. Results are required for 15/03/12 meeting. **Resolved unanimously to approve the draft questionnaire, to set the closing date as 9th March and accept CAPALC's offer to print the questionnaire.**

3. **To consider replacing All Weather Court Fence in Lt Downham Recreation Area** - At the Chairman's discretion due to the lateness of the meeting, the following item was deferred to the next meeting.

175/11 PARISH MATTERS

1. **Report from Neighbourhood Panel Meeting (23/01/12) (Cllr KO Winters)** – In his report read to the meeting, Cllr Winters informed that there is to be more police in the area, the police would like scrap merchants to have identity cards to combat illegal scrap dealings and metal thefts, Haddenham is to lose its CCC subsidized bus service for a new local service to be introduced, flytipping concerns and matters relating to Black Bank Road were reported.
2. **Email from K Evans re Neighbourhood Watch Schemes in the parish** – Ely Road has been established as a new Neighbourhood Watch Area. Mr Evans offered to attend a council meeting to discuss other potential areas in the parish that might want to be set up Neighbourhood Watch Schemes. It was agreed to invite Mr Evans to the Annual Parish Meeting on 16/04/12.
3. **War Memorial – to consider cleaning and to add eight names** - At the Chairman's discretion due to the lateness of the meeting, the following item was deferred to the next meeting.

176/11 HIGHWAYS, PARISH PATHS & BYWAYS

1. **Replies re matters reported from previous meetings:**
 - 1.1 **Adventurers Drove, Pymoor** – Due to drought conditions and heavy vehicles, it is noted that the road is beginning to deform. Depending on funds and other priorities, limited patching maintenance might be considered in the new financial year.
 - 1.2 **Memorial Hall, Hundred Foot Bank, Pymoor** – CCC Highways suggested that the Parish Council initially writes to the adjacent landowner to request the removal of the trees.
2. **To report current matters of concern:**
 - 2.1 **Byway 45, Marshalls Lane, Lt Downham** – Local residents expressed concerns regarding the 4x4 vehicles on the lane and the Byway, driving at speed and irresponsibly. They have already contacted CCC Countryside Team. The Council suggested they also report it to the police at the time the vehicles are there using 999.
 - 2.2 **Ely Road, Lt Downham** – Two street lights are out again.

177/11 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

9.40pm 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 178/11, 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. Two parishioners left.

178/11 HUMAN RESOURCES

The Chairman suggested dealing with the following items in reverse the order.
9.41pm Cllr Winters left the meeting

1. **To review staff appraisals:**
 - 1.2 **Clerk** – The Chairman informed that after reading the Clerk's appraisal at the last meeting, a formal proposal was not made for the Clerk's salary increase in accordance with her contract. It was proposed by Cllr MM Oldfield and seconded by Cllr BGF Smith.
Resolved unanimously to approve the Clerk's incremental salary increase from LC2/33 to LC2/34 with effect from 1st April 2012.
 - 1.1 **Handyman** – The wheelbarrow and ladder have been purchased, Cllr B Taylor is looking at the strimmer and, in accordance with the Council's Pension Policy, the Handyman is eligible to join the Pension Scheme; calculations are awaited from CCC. Cllr Smith informed of a Chainsaw Course with Ely & District Training Group, although specific equipment is required.
Resolved unanimously for the Clerk to make enquiries and the Handyman to attend a Chainsaw Training Course with Ely & District Training Group @ £175.00.

179/11 REQUEST OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

1. Maintenance of seats. The handyman will carry out an assessment for the next meeting.
2. All Weather Court Fence
3. War Memorial

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.50pm.

Signed (Chairman) Date