

**MINUTES of a meeting of Little Downham Parish Council held in the Village Hall,  
Main Street, Little Downham, on Thursday, 17 January 2013 commencing at 7.00pm.**

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

**Other attendees:** None.

Before the start of the meeting Cllr Winters gave the Clerk/Proper Officer an Application for Dispensation to discuss the Parish Council budget and Precept. Other members of the Council had applied in October and were granted Dispensation to the end of their term of office. The Clerk reminded Cllr Winters that Applications for Dispensation should be submitted to her in advance of the meeting in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders. The Clerk/Proper Officer approved Cllr Winters' application for this meeting only and will respond formally regarding future meetings.

**143/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** - Dist. Cllrs A Bailey, T Goodge and County Cllr P Read.

**144/12 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

1. **Cllr LEA Joel** declared a personal interest in item 152/12.3 (Bus shelter adjacent to 100 Main Street) because her rear garden boundary is adjacent to land at the rear of the Community Rooms. (Declaration 001-2013).
2. **Cllr RS Martin** declared a prejudicial interest in item 152/12.3 (Bus shelter adjacent to 100 Main Street) because he is a trustee of adjoining land (Community Rooms) (Declaration 002-2013).
3. **Cllr BGF Smith** declared a prejudicial interest in item 152/12.3 (Bus shelter adjacent to 100 Main Street) because he is a member of St Leonard's Church Council who manages the adjoining land (Community Rooms) (Declaration 003-2013).
4. **Cllr BL Taylor** declared a pecuniary and prejudicial interest in the following item 152/12.2 (Cemetery – Additional Burial Land offers) because he has submitted an offer and his land is adjacent to the existing cemetery (Declaration 004-2013).
5. **Cllr GH Taylor** declared a pecuniary and prejudicial interest in the following item 152/12.2 (Cemetery – Additional Burial Land offers) because she has submitted an offer and her land is adjacent to the existing cemetery (Declaration 005-2013).

**145/12 PUBLIC FORUM** – No comments.

**146/12 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS** (Dist. Cllrs A Bailey & A Goodge) – No reports.

**147/12 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT** (County Cllr P Read) – No report.

**148/12 TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

1. **Resolved** unanimously that the minutes of 13 December 2012 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record after the deletion of '*proposed entrance to the potential building plot*' and insertion of '*garden of 100 Main Street*' at item 136/12.3, line 3.

**149/12 MATTERS TO REPORT**

1. **(Min.100/12.1) Pymoor Play Area Fence** – An email was sent to Total Supplies confirming payment of remaining 50% of invoice and expressing bad workmanship. No response received.
2. **(Min.136/12.4) All Weather Court Maintenance** – Kestrel fencing has taken longer than expected to erect the fence because the floodlight cables are laid too close to the existing posts holes and new holes have had to be dug manually. Also before Christmas, work has continued without Tom Copping (Director) who was unexpectedly taken ill and admitted to hospital. He is out now and slowly getting back to work. Get well wishes were sent to him on behalf of the Council. The handyman is making slow progress manually, but hopes to borrow a 'Billy Goat' mechanical sweeper to clean the surface more quickly.
3. **(Min.141/12) War Memorial** – Mr Hibble thanks the Council for the contract and has informed that he plans to begin work in April with pressure washing and cleaning the memorial. The work will be spread over a few weeks because the memorial will need time to dry and the re-cutting will be done in good weather. A 25% deposit is required in April before work commences.

4. **(Min.137/12.2) Mr Turrell email: Dog Fouling in Little Downham** – ECDC emailed informing that when several locations are reported, a patrol is carried out.

**150/12 PLANNING MATTERS**

**1. Planning correspondence -**

- 1.1 **12/01027/FUL** Mr & Mrs Clarke, 20A Park Lane, Little Downham – Loft conversion, including three dormer windows, to provide bedroom, seating area and en-suite – **Resolved that the Parish Council had no concerns on the application.**

- 1.2 **12/01095/FUL** Mr John & Mrs Muriel Fuller, 1A Marshalls Lane, Little Downham – New pitched roof over existing single storey element to rear, garage conversion and car port - **Resolved that the Parish Council had no concerns on the application.**

**For information only:**

- 1.3 **ECDC - Applications approved: 12/00843/LBC**

**151/12 FINANCE**

1. **Monthly Internal Audit** was carried out by Cllrs GF Frankland and BGF Smith.

2. **To set Parish Precept (Min.118/12.5)** - The Government has decided to end the existing council tax benefit scheme and replace it with a Localised Council Tax Support scheme (LCTS) from 01/04/13. The new scheme is to be treated as a council tax discount rather than a benefit and the cost of these discounts has been converted into a number of 'Band D equivalent properties' and been deducted from the Parish Council tax base. This means the Parish Council tax base for 2013/14 is lower than previously calculated by ECDC. In order to try and mitigate some of the shortfall, the Government is to provide some funding to Billing Authorities (ECDC) to be passed on to the parishes. ECDC has allocated to Little Downham parish £6480 that will be issued with Precept instalments in April & September. So as to maintain around the same Council Tax Band D (parish) payment as previously calculated, the Council could deduct the allocated funding and request a Precept of £71,700.00. **The result of a recorded vote to request £71,700.00 was as follows: In favour (10)** - Cllrs DA Adams-Payne, CM Frankland, GF Frankland, CE Hall, MM Oldfield and BGF Smith, BL Taylor and GH Taylor, **Against (1)** - Cllr KO Winters.

**Resolved unanimously to set the Precept at £71,700.00 for 2013/14 financial year.**

It was noted that if similar funding is not allocated in 2014/15, the Precept may be increased or services cut if Parish Council Precepts are capped.

3. **To approve bills and other items for payment** - Proposed by Cllr GF Frankland, seconded by Cllr BGF Smith and unanimously agreed.

**Resolved unanimously to approve list of BACS payments 053 to 061 for the total sum of £4160.22.**

**152/12 PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND ASSETS**

1. **Pavilion Working Group – update** – Cllr Oldfield is working on the survey results and updating the grant application.

7.55pm Cllrs BL & GH Taylor left the meeting before the next item was discussed.

2. **Cemetery Working Group – update (Min.136/12.2)** – The group met on 10/01/13 to discuss the two offers. Cllr Adams-Payne had spoken to Mr A Runciman to establish the area of land being offered, to Ian Dewar (CAPALC) and Alan Dover (ECDC Planning Officer) regarding planning permission etc. and Martin Gowler (CCC Highways) regarding vehicular access. A CCC Highways email was received an hour before the meeting. The Chairman and Clerk will answer issues in the email. The working group will continue with the Runciman offer.

8.15pm Cllrs RS Martin and BGF Smith left the meeting and Cllrs BL & GH Taylor were invited back.

3. **Bus shelter adjacent 100 Main Street, Lt Downham – update (Min.136/12.3)** – A letter requesting to build a bus shelter on part of the land in front of the Community Rooms was sent to Rev M Talbot (St Leonard's Church). The Church Council will meet on 28/01/13.

8.20pm Cllrs RS Martin and BGF Smith were invited back to the meeting.

4. **Vehicles driving on Parish Council land at Townsend opposite The Plough Public House** – Following a report stating a resident has driven on the grass area that the water pump stands on, the Clerk was instructed to write to local residents to request they don't drive on Council land.

**153/12 PARISH MATTERS**

1. **Neighbourhood panel 14/01/13 Report (Cllr KO Winters)** – meeting cancelled due to snow.
2. **K Norton – Request support to complain about frequent power failures in the parish** – Since requesting the Council's support, Cllr Adams-Payne had made numerous enquiries about the electricity supply in Little Downham and Mr Norton had received a reply from UK Power Network. It apologised for the power cuts and believed they were probably caused by low flying swans in the area. Its solution to improving the long duration of power cuts is to install new remote control switchgear at Little Downham Village substation and replace about 50 metres of cable supplying this substation. It will need to talk to local landowners for access to the cable.
3. **Parish visit by Police & Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire, Sir Graham Bright 06/02/13** – The Chairman and members of the Council were invited to attend either of two sessions being held. The Chairman listed questions to ask Sir Graham on behalf of the Council. Cllrs C Hall, M Oldfield, B & G Taylor and KO Winters also expressed an interest to attend.

**154/12 HIGHWAYS, PARISH PATHS & BYWAYS**

1. **Replies re matters reported from previous meetings** – No replies.
2. **To report current matters of concern:**
  - 2.1 **Townsend green Opposite The Plough** - Cover needed for stopcock beside the water pump.
  - 2.2 **Gullies near St Leonard's Church** – Thanks expressed for cleaning the drains.
  - 2.3 **Black Bank Road, Little Downham** – Concern regarding narrow verge where a lorry recently left the road. What is being done to avoid recurrences?
  - 2.4 **Street Nameplates** – The Lawn Lane sign near California is not missing but partly blacked out.
3. **Parking on Main Street and Cannon Street – update (Min.138/12.4)** – CCC Highways replied informing that there is no funding in its budget to install yellow line. Under the Localism Act, the Parish Council could apply for lines but will have to fund it. The comments were noted.

**155/12 CORRESPONDENCE**

- For information only:**
1. **Ely & Soham Dial-a-Ride AGM, 11:30am 12/02/13 at Witchford Village Hall**

**156/12 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 157/12, 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.**

8.45pm The Clerk left the meeting prior to the next item being discussed. In the Clerk's absence, the minutes of item 157/12 were recorded by Cllr Oldfield.

**157/12 HUMAN RESOURCES**

1. **Clerk – to consider annual staff appraisal** - Mrs Wardle's appraisal was carried out by the Appraisal Officer, Cllr D Adams-Payne, on 15/01/13. The report was read to the Council. It was noted that the Clerk has no new responsibilities at present, but will have with the Pavilion Extension/Refurbishment and the acquisition of burial land. In conclusion of the report, the Clerk thanked the Chairman and Council for their co-operation and patience when her mother was taken ill in Turkey and with on-going hospital and Doctor appointments, and, the Chairman stated that the Clerk is an asset to the Parish Council and Community. Mrs Wardle had no matters of concern.

8.55pm The Clerk was invited back to the meeting.

**158/12 REQUEST OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION**

1. **Little Downham Recreation Field** – Concern was expressed that nine vehicles had driven recklessly on the recreation field twice in one evening when it was covered in snow.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.00pm.

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