

**MINUTES of a meeting of Little Downham Parish Council held in the Village Hall,
Main Street, Little Downham, on Thursday, 19 June 2014 commencing at 7.00pm.**

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

Other attendees: None

28/14 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – Dist Cllrs A Bailey, T Goodge and County Cllr P Read.

29/14 **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** - None

30/14 **PUBLIC FORUM** - None

31/14 **DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS** (Dist. Cllrs A Bailey & A Goodge) – No reports

32/14 **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT** (County Cllr P Read) - No reports

33/14 **TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

1. Cllr Winters objected to item 21/14.5. The result of a vote to approve the minutes as a true record was: 5 In favour, 1 Against, 2 Abstentions. (Cllrs G Frankland, M Oldfield and B Smith were absent at that meeting so did not vote).

Resolved that the minutes of 15 May 2014 were correct and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

34/14 **MATTERS TO REPORT**

1. **(Min.19/14.2) Main Street Crossing** – ECDC has approved S106 grant application for £5000 funding. The Clerk has confirmed acceptance of grant and terms and conditions to receive the funding. CCC has been informed and will authorise the design and carry out a stage 1 & 2 safety audit.
2. **(Min.162/13.2) Pymoor Roundabout** - ECDC has approved S106 grant application for £5000 funding. The Clerk has confirmed acceptance of grant and terms and conditions to receive the funding. Wicksteed has confirmed the order. Installation will be by mid August.
3. **(Min.19/14.2) LD War Memorial** – Work to commence week beginning 23/06/14. The church has kindly allowed the workmen to use the toilet and kitchen area facilities on the proviso that they clean up after themselves.
4. **(Min.170/13.5) Pavilion grant application** – The Clerk met at short notice with Jamie Conway (Big Lottery local advisor) and discussed aspects of enhancing the application before submission. Notes of the meeting have been given to the Pavilion working group and Jamie has offered to meet to discuss the application further.
5. **Rural Payments Agency – single payment scheme** – An inspector notified he was inspecting the holdings and has made minor changes to the holdings on the rural land register – namely excluding the peripheral pathway the pond in Holts Meadow. These changes are acceptable.
6. **Lt Downham Recreation Area Basketball Post** – The Clerk informed that the post had been replaced by Peter Saberton but she had not yet arranged with the handyman to order scaffold and someone to assist him to put the arm and board back. Cllr Adams-Payne offered assistance to the handyman in order to get the basketball facility back in use.
7. **(Min.19/14.3 Welcome Booklet** – The Clerk reported that she is waiting for a couple of organisation amendments to be received and then printing can take place.

35/14 **PLANNING MATTERS**

1. Planning correspondence -

1.1 **14/00431/OUM** Cambridge Property Group PLC, land at Downham Road, Ely - Food superstore and petrol filling station, six retail warehouse units, a pub restaurant, car parking, and highways and landscaping enhancements.

Little Downham Parish Council had concerns regarding this outline application and unanimously recommended outright refusal of permission for the following reasons:

1. Traffic - A retail development of this size will generate a high volume of traffic. This, added to traffic from the proposed adjacent leisure centre, cinema and developments north of Ely for up to 3000 dwellings, will cause extensive travel delays for people and businesses in Little Downham Parish and users of the A10 Ely bypass.

2. Highway Infrastructure - The proposed development will have a detrimental effect on the highway infrastructure and although provision is made for a roundabout on the B1411, no further provision is proposed towards enhancing the A10 roundabout.

3. Sports Fields - The Parish Council objected to the loss of the sports fields in this location. It considered that the new leisure centre being built adjacent to the existing sports fields would compliment both sports facilities. There is no explanation of where the sports fields would be relocated.

4. Proposed superstore, petrol filling station and retail warehouse units - There doesn't appear to be a support policy within the application for these elements of the proposal. According to local media, Tesco Stores Ltd has no intention of relocating to the Downham Road site. There are petrol stations on the A10 within 1.5 and 2 miles either side of the proposed site. The retail units would have a detrimental effect on other local businesses in the area.

- 1.2 **14/00485/FUL** Mr & Mrs D Webb, 2 Townsend, Lt Downham – Proposed side extension – **Resolved** - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns.
- 1.3 **14/00558/FUL** Isle Veterinary Group Ltd , Isle Small Animal Veterinary Centre, West Fen Road, Ely – Change of use from storage to office accommodation including extension to form entrance **Resolved** - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns.
- 1.4 **14/00570/AGN** Mr & Mrs Runciman, Bridge Farm, High Road, Lt Downham – Construction of barn for farm animals. **This item was not discussed because notification of refusal was received from ECDC prior to the meeting.**
- 1.5 **14/00571/AGN** Mr Basil Taylor, Mount Pleasant Farm, 66-68 Main Street, Pymoor – Construction of portal frame barn. **This item was not discussed because notification of approval was received from ECDC prior to the meeting.**

Planning correspondence cont...

For information only:

- 1.6 ECDC: Applications approved: 14/00261/FUL, 14/00262/LBC, 14/00265/FUL, 14/00298/FUL,
1.7 ECDC: Applications refused: 14/00270/FUL

36/14 **FINANCE**

1. **Monthly Internal Audit** was carried out by Cllr GF Frankland and Cllr LEA Joel.
2. **To appoint Internal Auditor 2014/2015** – It was acknowledged that Mrs Wallace had held this position for a number of years. However, she was considered to be professional in her duties and has maintained her independence throughout the audits by having no involvement in the decision making, management or control of the Council. There were no other proposals. **Resolved unanimously to offer Mrs Caroline Wallace the position of Internal Auditor for the year ending 31 March 2015.**
The Clerk will write to Mrs Wallace with a Letter of Engagement.
3. **To consider funds request from Downham Parish Conservation Group** – The Conservation volunteers expressed appreciation for the grant of £300 in 2012 to promote the group and purchase maintenance materials for the Local Nature Reserve and Orchard. The balance is currently £24 and they requested another grant for future work. The DPCG's treasurer has a record of the expenditure and the Clerk confirmed funds are available in the budget. **Resolved unanimously to approve a grant of £300 to Downham Parish Conservation Group.**
4. **To consider purchase of new strimmer for Downham Parish Conservation Group** – Three members of the group visited Thurlow Nunn Standens and G & J Pecks to compare models and prices of strimmers. They favoured the Honda UMK435UE from Pecks @ approximately £420 (inc. VAT) as the best buy and required two new helmets. Prices are discountable. It was agreed that these items are essential for the group's continued maintenance work. **Resolved to authorise the purchase of the Honda UMK435UE Strimmer, two protective helmets and additional gloves as they required.**
The Clerk will arrange the purchase of the items.

5. **To approve bills and other items for payment** - Items for payment were proposed by Cllr GF Frankland and seconded by Cllr LEA Joel.
Resolved unanimously to approve list of payments for cheque numbers 001048 - 001051, direct debit and BACS payments 190 to 199 for the total sum of £7301.09.

37/14 COUNCIL MATTERS

1. **ECDC – Proposed Pilot Parish Conference** – The Council agreed with the proposed East Cambs Parish Conference following the loss of the Neighbourhood Panel Meetings earlier this year. It was suggested that the Clerk and a councillor would attend. No topics were suggested, but preference was made for full assembly discussions rather than individual workshops because the attendees may wish to join in on more than one workshop and knowledge of the topics can be limited to those around the table.
2. **To approve Draft Pensions Discretions Policy** – Following Government Pension Scheme changes in April 2014, the Council was required to adopt a new Pensions Discretions Policy in accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme.
Resolved to approve the draft and adopt the **Little Downham Parish Council Pensions Discretions Policy**.
The Clerk is required to forward a copy of the approved policy to LGPS by 30/06/14.

38/14 PARISH MATTERS

1. **To receive response from Environment Agency re risk of flooding concerns** – All members received a copy of the response. It was felt that the EA had not responded to the concerns specifically and there were still questions unanswered about evacuation procedures. It was agreed that Cllr RS Martin would inform the Clerk of what information is required. The Clerk will contact Cambridge & Peterborough Local Resilience Forum to ask what procedures they have in place re flood risks.

39/14 HIGHWAYS, PARISH PATHS & BYWAYS

1. Replies re matters reported from previous meetings
- 1.1 **(Min.175/13.2.1) Hedge - 62A Ely Road, Lt Downham** – The property owner is intending to take it out and replace the hedge with a wall. He will keep it trimmed and tidy until he can get it removed. As the path surface under the hedge will be damaged, Pam Joyce will arrange to tidy up any trips hazards left in the footway.
- 1.2 **(Min.175/13.2.1) Black Bank Road Funding** – The 2013/14 funding for Black Bank Road was not approved. However, £150k schemes to improve Black Bank Road and £204,950 to improve Westmoor Common have been approved for 2014/15. No dates yet when work will commence.
- 1.3 **(Min.175/13.2.4) CCC Highways ‘Drop-In’ session** – CCC has arranged alternate fortnightly session at Sutton and Stretham with effect from 26/06/14. I cannot see them arranging anything in Lt Downham now. They asked if the room for the Book Café would be available at any other time so Pam Joyce could have the room to herself and any chatter with her visitors would not disturb the book people etc. This might not be an option because they do not want to pay.
- 1.4 **Stones on highway verge** - CCC wrote to the occupiers of 54a and 78 Cannon Street to ask that they remove the stones. They were invited to discuss alternative measures to protect the verge area such as some short reflective verge markers. These would be visible to the travelling public and help protect the verge area without causing a hazard. In relation to No. 54a, according to CCC mapping system this landscaped area is highway and was once just verge. Pam Joyce has no real objection to them landscaping it providing the shrubs etc stay small, however she will make it clear that it is highway land and could be taken back by CCC if need be for any reason.
- 1.5 **North Fen Drove** – CCC has arranged for some works to be done to try to improve the surface and take out the potholes and some of the sunken worst areas. This drove has also been put forward for a 're-tread' scheme.
2. To report current matters of concern
- 2.1 **Shops at 29 Main Street, Lt Downham** – It was request that concern be expressed to the ECDC conservation officer that the once convenience store still has paper taped up in the windows and this is unsightly in the village conservation area.
- 2.2 **Trees at Seven Sister, B1411 (Min.102/13.1.2)** – Concern was expressed that nothing appears to have been done about the dead trees at Seven Sisters. The Clerk was asked to forward the concern again.
- 2.3 **Path Encroachments** – Overgrown hedges were reported on Main Street, Lt Downham near the Church.

3. **To consider LHI bid for 2015/16** – No suggested bids at present.

40/14 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 41/14, 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.

41/14 PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND ASSETS

1. **Tenders for Little Downham Recreation Area Ditch (Min.19/14.1)** – No quotes were received. Mr Freeman expressed concern at the costs and did not want to consider providing a quote. Littleport & Downham IDB confirmed receiving the email but did not respond with a quote. It was decided to ask the handyman to clear the ditch of litter and tree branches and to request quotes for the slub to be placed along the ditch edge or in a particular place in the recreation area.

42/14 REQUEST OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

1. Cemetery update
2. Pymoor Cricket & Social Club Driveway

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

Signed (Chairman) Date