

**MINUTES of a meeting of Little Downham Parish Council held in the Village Hall,
Main Street, Little Downham, on Thursday, 03 December 2015 commencing at 7.00pm.**

Councillors present: MM Oldfield, in the chair, and DA Adams-Payne, CE Hall, LEA Joel (7.08pm),
RS Martin, MAC Seidler, BL Taylor, GH Taylor and KO Winters. Clerk: Mrs J Wardle

Other attendees: One parishioner.

110/15 TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Cllrs JW Barker and JL Waters,
County Cllr P Read and Dist. Cllrs A Bailey and M Bradley.

111/15 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. **Cllr DA Adams-Payne** declared a prejudicial interest in item 123/15.1 (Cemetery Working Group – Formal Complaint) because she is a member of the Cemetery Working Group. (Declaration 026-2015).
2. **Cllr LEA Joel** declared a prejudicial interest in item 123/15.1 (Cemetery Working Group – Formal Complaint) because she is a member of the Cemetery Working Group. (Declaration 027-2015).
3. **Cllr MM Oldfield** declared a prejudicial interest in item 123/15.1 (Cemetery Working Group – Formal Complaint) because she is a member of the Cemetery Working Group. (Declaration 028-2015).
4. **Cllr BL Taylor** declared a prejudicial interest in item 123/15.1 (Cemetery Working Group – Formal Complaint) because he is a co-complainant. (Declaration 029-2015).
5. **Cllr GH Taylor** declared a prejudicial interest in item 123/15.1 (Cemetery Working Group – Formal Complaint) because she is a co-complainant. (Declaration 030-2015).
6. Members of the Council reminded Cllr Winters that as a member of the Cemetery Working Group he too had a duty to declare a prejudicial interest in item 123/15.1. He refused to declare an interest.

7.07pm Cllr Winters left the meeting to look for an envelope.

7.08pm Cllr LEA Joel arrived and expressed apologies for lateness.

7.09pm Cllr Winters returned to the meeting.

112/15 PUBLIC FORUM

1. The Parishioner expressed concerns and objections to Planning Application 15/01336/FUL and believed that the provision of a taxi control office would increase the number of extra vehicles parking on Main Street, which is already a heavily populated road with parked cars. The Change of Use classification would open up the property to other uses that could be detrimental to the primarily residential area

113/15 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS – No reports

114/15 TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. **Resolved** that the minutes of 19 November 2015 were correct and to be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

115/15 MATTERS TO REPORT

1. **(Min. 99/15.1) Little Downham Youth Group – Report from Cllr MM Oldfield** – Cllr Oldfield reported that she attended a meeting at 18 Park Lane, Lt Downham, on 23/11/15 with Carol Hebbard and Jean Gallyer. Cllr G Taylor apologised that she forgot to attend. Carol Hebbard informed that youth group sessions were not held during the Autumn term due to a drop in the number of youths attending. Following a consultation with the youths, 25 of them expressed more interest in setting up a drama group on Saturday mornings in the Village Hall. Carol would like to use the Council's funding allocated for the Autumn and Spring terms to pay for three youth workers, a drama coach and the weekly hall hire. As this matter was not an item on the agenda, the council was unable to make a formal decision. The Clerk was instructed to place Youth Group Funding on the 14/01/16 agenda.
2. **(Min.73/15.3) Cambs Rural CAB** – A letter of thanks was received for the £300 donation, but no reference was made to the Council's interpretation of the donation request letter.

3. **(Min.103/15.1) To consider installation of dog bin on Lawn Lane opposite the cemetery** – A new bin is on order for the recreation area. The Handyman will re-use the existing bin and post and relocate to Lawn Lane. If a new post is needed it will cost £61.89 + VAT from Glasdon Ltd.
4. **(Min.89/15.2) New seats to replace existing seats on Lawn Lane and Main Street, Lt Downham** – The seats are on order. Kenny and Harpal Atwal (Nisa Store) have confirmed they are happy to sponsor the seat outside the Village Hall.
5. **Local Nature Reserve Water leak** – A high water bill received indicated there was a leak in the pipe that serves the stand pipe in Pingle Wood and animal troughs in Myles and Holts Meadows. To solve the problem, the Handyman will replace the ball valves and floats in the troughs.

116/15 **PLANNING MATTERS**

1. Planning correspondence -
- 1.1 **15/01336/FUL** Mr Andy Allen, 59 Main Street, Lt Downham – Change of use A1 to B1 for taxi control office – **Resolved** - Little Downham Parish Council had concerns regarding this application and recommended outright refusal for the following reasons:
 1. **Parking** – Main Street is a predominantly residential area and already has parking and congestion problems in the vicinity of this location because, like this property, many properties have no rear access and vehicles are parked on both sides of the carriageway day and night. There is concern that the proposed use will incur more parking issue when taxis visit the control centre.
 2. **Opening hours** – The proposed opening hours of Monday to Friday 07:30 to 18:00 seems unrealistic for a taxi control centre and it is anticipated that these hours will want to be extended in the future, which may be detrimental to local residents.
 3. **Noise and fumes pollution** – The concern is that the proposed use will lead to noise and fumes pollution from the increase in vehicles visiting and leaving the proposed taxi control centre.

Additional comment:

 4. The Parish Council considered its comment following expressions of concern by local residents regarding the application.

For information only:

- 1.2 ECDC: Applications approved: 15/01077/FUL,
- 1.3 ECDC: Applications refused: 15/01194/FUL

7.52pm The Parishioner left

117/15 **FINANCE**

1. **Monthly Internal Audit** was carried out by Cllrs MAC Seidler and GH Taylor.
2. **To set Precept 2016/17 (Min.101/15.3)** – It was proposed by Cllr DA Adams-Payne and seconded by Cllr GH Taylor to set the 2016/17 Precept at £77,560.00, which is an increase of 1.5% on the current precept and as per the estimated figure sent to ECDC at the end of November.
Resolved unanimously to set the Precept at £77,560.00 for 2016/17 financial year.
3. **To consider purchasing a Power Brush to sweep the All Weather Court** - Due to warm and wet conditions, the All Weather Court has a build up of algae again causing the surface to be slippery in places. The chemical spray carried out in May did not improve the conditions. The Handyman requested a power brush sweeper to clear the silt on the surface and encourage drainage.
Resolved unanimously to approve the purchase of a Texas Power Brush 710TGE @ £670.70 including VAT and delivery from Sweepfast Ltd, subject to a demonstration and confirmation that it will solve the problem.
4. **To approve bills and other items for payment** - The following items presented for payment were proposed by Cllr MAC Seidler and Cllr GH Taylor.
Resolved unanimously to approve BACS payments 387 - 394 and direct debits for the total sum of £5647.26.

The Clerk pointed out that due to the meeting being held early in December, some other expected invoices and the Barclaycard statement had not yet been received for payment.

Resolved unanimously, in accordance with Financial Regulations Clause 6.4, that the Clerk be authorised to refer the Barclaycard statement and other invoices to the Chairman and Vice Chairman for approval if payments are due before Christmas.

118/15 COUNCIL MATTERS

1. **To adopt draft Conflicts of Interest Policy** – No objections or amendments recommended. It was proposed by Cllr DA Adams-Payne and seconded by Cllr CE Hall.
Resolved unanimously to adopt the draft Conflicts of Interest Policy.
2. **To adopt draft Little Downham Recreation Area Access Statement** – No objections or amendments recommended. It was proposed by Cllr KO Winters and seconded by Cllr GH Taylor. **Resolved unanimously to adopt the draft Little Downham Recreation Area Access Statement.**
3. **To review Equality Policy** – There were no objections or proposed amendments to the updated Equality Policy. It was proposed by Cllr CE Hall and seconded by Cllr MAC Seidler.
Resolved unanimously to adopt the reviewed Equality Policy.
4. **To review Child And Vulnerable Adult Policy** - There were no objections or proposed amendments to the updated Child And Vulnerable Adult Policy. It was proposed by Cllr KO Winters and seconded by Cllr GH Taylor.
Resolved unanimously to adopt the reviewed Child And Vulnerable Adult Policy.

119/15 PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND ASSETS

1. **To review grass specifications for 2016 season** – The Council reviewed the specifications and amended to include two cuts to the BMX track and the play area grass be collected.
Resolved unanimously to approve the 2016 Grass Cutting Specifications and invite tenders for the 20216 season.
2. **To consider options for Lt Downham Pavilion** – Following the unsuccessful Stage Two BIG Lottery application, it was decided to consider a refurbishment of the Pavilion and apply for a grant from Amey Cespa Community Funding. A new Pavilion Working Group was set up consisting of Cllrs CE Hall, LEA Joel, MAC Seidler and KO Winters. The group will consider items such as the provision of new toilets, disabled toilet, disabled access ramp, Referee's room, new kitchen and storage facilities.
3. **Parish Council Bus Shelter Cleaning** –
 - 3.1 **Main Street Shelter outside No. 100** – The shelter was damaged. The Handyman will carry out repairs.
 - 3.2 **Perspex Bus Shelters (Cannon Street, Main Street, Ely Road, Lawn Lane and Second Drove) (Min.99/15.6)** – As an example of his cleaning abilities, Mason Hyde cleaned half of Cannon Street shelter to show the difference. He estimated that each shelter would cost £20 to be cleaned; however, he reserved the right to negotiate the cost if it takes longer to clean than anticipated. The Council approved his work.
Resolved unanimously to award a contract to Mason Hyde Window Cleaning to clean the Parish Council Perspex shelters @ £20 per shelter, starting with an initial clean now and then twice yearly in April and October.
 - 3.3 **Main Street Brick Shelter adjacent to the Village Hall** – It has been noticed during the past few months that David Stow has resumed sweeping out the shelter on a weekly basis. It was decided to reinstate an honorarium that was previously given to him before he was ill.
Resolved unanimously to give David Stow an honorarium of £25 twice annually (June and December) for sweeping out the shelter.

120/15 PARISH MATTERS

1. **Electoral Review East Cambs Ward – Downham Villages** – The Boundary Commission produced its draft recommendations and, as put forward by the Parish Council, proposed that Downham Villages consist of Downham and Coveney parishes and be represented by one Ward Councillor. The Parish Council expressed support for the proposed recommendation.
2. **Information relating to Riparian Landowners Flood Risks** - Cambridgeshire County Council issued a leaflet relating to Riparian Landowners' Flood Risks and their duty to maintain dykes and watercourses.

121/15 HIGHWAYS, PARISH PATHS & BYWAYS

- 1. **Replies re matters reported from previous meetings**
- 1.1 **Oxlode, Adventurers Drove, Pymoor** – An order has been placed for some work to be done.
- 1.2 **Main Street Zebra Crossing, Lt Downham** – The Belisha Beacon is still out.
- 1.3 **Downham Feoffees school Trees overhanging footways** – The Clerk is awaiting a reply from the school.
- 2. **To report current matters of concern:**
- 2.1 **East end of Pymoor Lane** - Pothole on the corner needs filling.
- 2.2 **Grips in verges** – Grips are needed on Cowbridge Hall Road and Pymoor Lane.
- 2.3 **Shop, 31 Main Street, Lt Downham** – The shop is unsightly in the village Conservation Area. The Clerk will report the concern to ECDC Conservation Officer.
- 2.4 **To the rear of Main Drove Bus Shelter, Lt Downham** – It was reported that someone is regularly flytipping in that area and a local parishioner is clearing the items. The Clerk advised that each incident be reported to ECDC when it occurs and ECDC will arrange for the flytipping to be removed. Incidents can be reported on ECDC website or by phone on 01353 665555.

122/15 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 123/15, 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.

123/15 COUNCIL MATTERS

- 1.1 **Cemetery Working Group – Formal Complaint by Mr & Mrs Taylor (Min.108/15.1)** – The Clerk reported that a response was received from the Cemetery Working Group within the five working days deadline and sent to Mr & Mrs Taylor within the specified time. A reply was received from Mr & Mrs Taylor informing that they were not satisfied with the response from the Cemetery Working Group. The Council was therefore required to appoint a Complaints Committee to consider the complaint and deliberate if there was a case to answer or not.
- 1.2 **Freedom of Information request – Mr & Mrs Taylor** - The Clerk reported that since the last meeting, a Freedom of Information request was received from Mr & Mrs Taylor relating to the Cemetery Working Group’s meeting of 15/10/15 and the Council members’ representations requested at the meeting held 24/09/15. The Clerk issued a letter to Mr & Mrs Taylor informing that the request would be dealt with in accordance with the Parish Council’s Freedom of Information Act Policy and the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 1.3 **Formal Complaint by Cllr KO Winters against Cllr DA Adams-Payne and Cllr MM Oldfield** - The Clerk reported that since the last meeting, a formal letter of complaint was received from Cllr KO Winters against Cllr DA Adams-Payne and Cllr MM Oldfield. She proceeded to distribute sealed envelopes to Cllrs DA Adams-Payne, MM Oldfield and KO Winters in accordance with the Parish Council’s complaints Handling Procedure.
- 1.4 **To appoint a Complaints Committee in accordance with the Parish Council’s Complaints Handling Procedure** – It was apparent at this point of the meeting that Cllrs DA Adams-Payne, LEA Joel, MM Oldfield, BL Taylor and GH Taylor were required to leave the room following their earlier declarations of prejudicial interests in this item. Cllr KO Winters was a member of the Cemetery Working Group and therefore not eligible to appoint a Complaints Committee to deliberate the complaint made against the Cemetery Working Group. This left three remaining members of the Council eligible to appoint members to a Complaints Committee, but as the Parish Council requires four members to be quorate to make decisions, the Council was declared inquorate to discuss the item further. The item was deferred to the January meeting.

124/15 REQUEST OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION - None

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.15 pm.
Members were invited to stay for mince pies, chocolate truffles and mulled wine provided by the Chairman and the Clerk.

Signed (Chairman) Date