

**MINUTES of a meeting of Little Downham Parish Council held in the Village Hall,
Main Street, Little Downham, on Thursday, 21 April 2016 commencing at 7.00pm.**

Councillors present: MM Oldfield, in the chair, and JW Barker, CE Hall, LEA Joel, MAC Seidler, BL Taylor (7.03pm), GH Taylor (7.03pm), JL Waters (7.06pm) and KO Winters. Clerk: Mrs J Wardle

Other attendees: County Cllr L Dupre, Dist. Cllrs A Bailey and five parishioners.

172/15 TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Cllr RS Martin and Dist. Cllr M Bradley.

7.03pm Cllrs BL & GH Taylor arrived.

173/15 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. **Cllr JW Barker** declared a prejudicial interest in item 178/15.1.2 (Application 16/00263/OUT) because he is father to the applicant. (Declaration 012-2016).
2. **Cllr LEA Joel** declared a prejudicial interest in item 178/15.1.4 (Application 16/00366/FUL) because she is an applicant. (Declaration 013-2016).
3. **Cllr MAC Seidler** declared a prejudicial interest in item 178/15.1.4 (Application 16/00366/FUL) because she is a neighbour and friend of the applicants. (Declaration 014-2016).
4. **Cllr BL Taylor** declared personal and prejudicial interests in item 123/15.1.1 (Application 16/00259/FUL) because the applicant is his son. (Declaration 015-2016).
5. **Cllr GH Taylor** declared personal and prejudicial interests in item 123/15.1.1 (Application 16/00259/FUL) because the applicant is his son. (Declaration 016-2016).
6. **Cllr KO Winters** declared a prejudicial interest in item 178/15.1.2 (Application 16/00263/OUT) because he is an uncle to the applicant. (Declaration 017-2016).

7.06pm Cllrs JL Waters arrived.

174/15 PUBLIC FORUM

Cllr J Barker stated that people wanting to build on greenbelt land in the fen should be supported because they want to live and work in the fen. Cllr Taylor stated that there are not half the houses there used to be. Cllr Winters stated that planning agenda items 1.2 and 1.6 should have support in both cases because they have family ties and business, which the community needs to thrive. Miss Barker spoke in support of her application to live near relatives in the area. Mr S Packman spoken in support of his application where he lives and has a business and wants his brother to live there too. Cllr Joel explained details of her application, which is in a conservation area.

175/15 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

1. County Cllr Dupre updated on the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Devolution proposal for the East of England. The £30m a year deal spread across Cambridgeshire, Peterborough, Norfolk and Suffolk, which includes the cost of an elected Mayor and cabinet to make decisions for the entire area, has been rejected by most Local Authorities and Enterprise Partnerships in the combined area. ECDC voted on 13 April to ratify the agreement. It is not clear where the devolution proposal goes now. The Draft Transport Strategy for East Cambs closed on 8 April. Council officers will consider all responses and draft a report for further consideration by the relevant county committee in the autumn. The Total Transport Project consultation was open until 13 May for local residents to agree or disagree with specific proposal for changes to transport services, which are planned to be in place from September. Local people can gain information and complete a survey at a drop-in session on 6 May in the Book Café. The County Council has voted to cease funding 50% of the cost of journeys on Community Transport Dial-a-Ride services. The decision will possibly mean an increase of between £2 and £4.50 in the cost of most journeys, however, due to numerous representations from the service users, the Council has held back on implementing the decision until it has sought further views from passengers. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has reviewed the County Council election boundaries for Cambridgeshire and been forced to hold a further round of consultation due to its final recommendations being so unpopular. The consultation closes on 20 June.

To ensure co-ordination between County and East Cambs District Boundary reviews, the Boundary Commission has deferred publication of the final recommendations for the District Council boundaries until 16 August. Street lights will be dimmed by up to 60% in larger urban centres such as Ely, Littleport and Chatteris, with many being switched off between 02:00 and 06:00. This is part of the CCC 25-year street lighting contract with Balfour Beatty. Ely Library is close on Sundays and will reduce the amount of new stock it buys, as part of a £500k savings package required by CCC's library service. Further potential savings, including the mobile library service, are still being discussed. Cllr Dupre concluded by informing of her drop-in sessions in Sutton and arrangements to be held in the Book Café. Information is available on her website.

7.25pm County Cllr Dupre was thanked for her report and left.

2. Dist. Cllr Anna Bailey informed on ECDC's views on Devolution and its reasons for ratifying the deal. ECDC believes it is well placed geographically to benefit from the £175m for delivery of new shared ownership homes, £150m for key roads, £150m for training of adults' skills and £2m for apprenticeships. It anticipates that there could be more deals available 'down the road' too. ECDC has listed its 'asks' around infrastructure, the Ely City Bypass, Soham Railway, the double tract section at Ely north junction, the Newmarket junction of A142 onto the A14, an upgrade of the A10 and Community Land Trusts. Coming up on the agenda is an A10 upgrade in principle to the Lazy Otter, which leaves a short distance to Ely. Anna confirmed that the toilets in Ely at Sacrist Gate and Newnham Street carpark will definitely close. Barton Road car park is staying open for at least a year with a contribution from City of Ely Council. Remaining toilets will be deep cleaned and refurbished. A final decision is due in June on the Leisure Centre planning application and the Cinema complex is well underway. Recycling was at 33% before the wheelie bins and up to 56% now. For two quarters, it has topped 60%, but not maintained it. ECDC's waste contract ends in 2017. Veolia's performance is being assessed and needs to 'clean up its act' if it wants its contract to be extended. However, the service could be brought in-house through the ECDC Local Authority Trading Company services. Dog bins are to have number stickers on them and alternate coloured bin liners to ensure that they are emptied regularly. Cllr Bailey was thanked for her report.

176/15 **TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

1. **Resolved that the minutes of 17 March 2016 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.**

177/15 **MATTERS TO REPORT**

1. **(Min. 163/15.4) Anglian Water Inspection of Lt Downham Pavilion** – The inspector returned on 08/04/16 and was pleased with the toilet and storeroom requirements. He agreed with the handyman's proposal to cut off the stopcock to the pipe in the field and replace it with a double check valve tap in the toilet of changing room one. The Cricketers will need to attach a hose to the tap to get water to the cricket table. All work has been approved by the inspector.
2. **(Min.166/15.2) New Seat on Lawn Lane** – The Clerk confirmed that funds have now been received for all sponsored seats.
3. **(Min.166/15.3) Circus Tyana on Lt Downham Recreation field** – A copy of the Circus insurance cover had been received. The recreation area gate will be locked by 10pm when the circus is there. Mr Todd was informed of who holds the gate keys should he need access when the gate is locked.
4. **CCC Total Transport consultation - ends 13/05/16** - The survey is to find out what people think about proposed changes to transport services in the Total Transport Pilot area, which is the northern half of East Cambridgeshire, centred on Ely. Parents and carers of children who use school transport, people who use council transport to get to day centres, and local bus and community transport users are encouraged to complete the survey. A drop-in session is to be held on Friday, 6th May from 10.30am to 1.00pm in Little Downham Village Hall. All comments will help with planning future transport in this area, which is being launched in September 2016.
5. **Annual Parish Meeting 29th April** – Debbie Wildridge will attend with information boards and literature/ leaflets about Community Land Trusts.

178/15 **PLANNING MATTERS**

1. Planning correspondence -
7.45pm Cllrs BL & GH Taylor left the meeting having declared personal and prejudicial interests in the next item.
- 1.1 **16/00259/FUL** Mr R Taylor, Willow Farm, Pymoor Common, Lt Downham – Agricultural lean to extensions to building approved 15/00132/FUL – **Resolved** - **Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.**
- 7.50pm Cllrs BL & GH Taylor returned to the meeting. Cllrs JW Barker and KO Winters left the meeting having declared prejudicial interests in the next item.
- 1.2 **16/00263/OUT** Miss Amy Barker, Land opposite The Common House, 1A Second Drove, Lt Downham – Proposed 4-bedroom dwelling – **Resolved** - **Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.**
- 7.56pm Cllrs JW Barker and KO Winters returned to the meeting.
- 1.3 **16/00332/FUL** Mr Terry Needs, Holly Bush House, Downham Common, Lt Downham – Re-submission to previously approved 15/00640/FUL for construction of new chalet style dwelling on land to the side access of same driveway (Potential Departure) – **Resolved** - **Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.**
- 8.02pm Cllrs LEA Joel and MAC Seidler left the meeting having declared prejudicial interests in the next item.
- 1.4 **16/00366/FUL** Mr & Mrs Julius and Linda Joel, Main Street Lt Downham – Proposed new dropped kerb and front boundary wall and railings – **Resolved** - **Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.**
- 8.08pm Cllrs LEA Joel and MAC Seidler returned to the meeting.
- 1.5 **16/00394/FUL** Mr & Mrs Paul Smart, 1 Acred Close Lt Downham - Single storey rear extension – **Resolved** - **Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.**
- 1.6 **16/00078/FUL** Mr S Packman, Land Adjacent 17 Second Drove Little Downham - Proposed new dwelling – **Resolved** - **Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.**
- For information only:**
- 1.7 ECDC: Applications approved: 15/00939/FUL, 15/01428/LBC,
1.8 ECDC: Applications refused: 16/00159/OUT,
- 8.15pm Four parishioners left.

179/15 **FINANCE**

1. **Monthly Internal Audit** was carried out by Cllr JW Barker and Cllr MM Oldfield.
2. **To update on Zipwire project in Lt Downham Play Area and approve Order Confirmation** – The Order and BACS payments method were reviewed and approved.
Resolved **unanimously to confirm and approve the Zipwire Order and that the following BACS payments be paid when due.**
1. £2424.33 Plus VAT for the Deposit – payable as soon as possible (20% of main order)
 2. £3636.50 Plus VAT for the equipment – on commencement of work (30% of main order)
 3. £5586.82 Plus VAT for the equipment – on completion of work (remaining balance)
 4. £474.00 Plus VAT for the RoSPA inspection – on completion
 5. £239.99 Plus VAT for the additional grassguard tiles – possibly requested with invoice 3.
- 8.23pm Dist Cllr Bailey left the meeting.
3. **Magpas Air Ambulance (Helimedi) – donation request** – It was agreed to donate £200.
Resolved **unanimously to approve a donation of £200 to MAGPAS Air Ambulance under S137, Local Government Act 1972.**

4. **East Anglian Children's Hospice (EACH) – donation request** – It was agreed to donate £148. **Resolved** unanimously to approve a donation of £148 to East Anglian Children's Hospice under S137, Local Government Act 1972.
5. **To approve bills and other items for payment** - The following items presented for payment were proposed by Cllr JW Barker and Cllr MM Oldfield. The Clerk reported that the monthly direct debit to EDF Energy had been reduced to £36 with effect from 07/03/16. **Resolved** unanimously to approve BACS payments 428 - 437 and direct debits for the total sum of £4581.57.

180/15 COUNCIL MATTERS

1. **Complaint Committee Decisions regarding complaints and recommendations to the Council (Min.137/15)** – The Chairman read out a letter from the Chairman of the Complaints Committee confirming the Committee's decisions and recommended actions:

1. **Complaint No. 1** - BL & GH Taylor against the Lt Downham Cemetery Working Group claiming it acted outside its remit - THE COMPLAINT WAS DISMISSED. No recommendations.

2. **Complaint No. 2** - KO Winters against Cllr DA Adams-Payne and Cllr MM Oldfield claiming they bullied him at a Parish Council meeting - THE COMPLAINT WAS DISMISSED. No recommendations.

3. **Complaint No. 3** - DA Adams-Payne against Cllr KO Winters for non-declaration of interest at 3rd December 2015 meeting - THE COMPLAINT WAS UPHeld.

Recommendations:

The Complaint Committee strongly recommended that Cllr KO Winters undertake Code of Conduct training and, to facilitate that, it was recommended that in-house Code of Conduct training for the whole council should be arranged within the next nine months. The Parish Council is requested to monitor the recommendations on behalf of the Complaints Committee.

4. **Complaint No. 4** - KO Winters against Mrs J Wardle (Parish Clerk) claiming she was bringing the Parish Council into disrepute and creating a bullying scenario - THE COMPLAINT WAS DISMISSED. No recommendations.

It was noted that the Clerk will arrange Code of Conduct training after co-option of the new councillor.

2. **Parish Council Vacancy following resignation of Debbie Adams-Payne** - Debbie's letter was on received 23/03/16 and read to the Council. The Clerk confirmed that, pursuant to section 87(2) of the Local Government Act 1972, relevant notices were placed in the parish council notice boards on 29/03/16 giving formal notice of the vacancy and informing if, within 14 days (not including Saturdays or Sundays) after the date of the notice, a request for an election to fill the vacancy is made in writing to the proper officer of the East Cambridgeshire District Council by ten electors for the Parish an election would be held to fill the vacancy; otherwise, the vacancy would be filled by the Parish Council. Confirmation was received from ECDC on 21/04/16 that it had not received ten requests from electors, therefore the Parish Council was authorised to fill the casual vacancy by co-option. The Clerk was instructed to advertise the vacancy on 25/04/16 with a closing date of 09/05/16. The co-option will take place on 12/05/16.

181/15 PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND ASSETS

1. **Vandalism at Holts Meadow Pond** - The Council was asked to consider approval of battery operated cameras in two locations of the Local Nature Reserve following an incident noticed during the second week of the Easter school holidays. The Police were informed that a bottle had been broken on Holts Pond bridge and the wire displaced, various bottles and cups were floating and on the bottom of the pond and the life belt had been thrown in. The Conservation Group is concerned that the vandalism has affected the Pond wildlife, including Great Crested Newts, that are a protected species. They suggest the installation of motion-detect, infra-red cameras at the Holts Meadow Pond and Pingle Wood Cartshed. The cameras will mainly be used for Downham Feoffees children's educational material but would also capture photographs of vandalism and provide a timeframe of the criminal behaviour. Notices would be put up when the cameras are installed. The Council is registered with the Information Commissioner in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. **Resolved** unanimously to approve the installation of cameras in the Local Nature Reserve.

2. **Voluntary Registration of Parish Council land and registered common land** - The Council was updated on the voluntary registration of its land with the Land Registry by HEY Solicitors. The matter had been progressing very slowly since the Council's instructions were given in 2013. Cllr GH Taylor questioned ownership of one piece of land in Coffue Drove as belonging to her family and not the Council. She stated she had deeds and was asked to present them so the matter could be determined.
3. **Pymoor Recreation Field north boundary post and wire fence** – It was reported that one of the concrete posts was broken. Due to the age of the posts, the Clerk was instructed to obtain quotes to replace them all.

182/15 PARISH MATTERS

1. **ECDC Local Trading Company – Reports from Cllrs Oldfield & Joel (Min.153/15.3)** – It was reported that local government authorities are not permitted to make a profit, however, if they set up a trading company they could 'farm out' up to 20% of specific services to enable those departments to be self-sufficient. Some ECDC staff are seconded to the Trading Company. One of the services is the hire-out of market stalls, which were only being used at the Thursday and Saturday markets. Funds raised can also be used to build new dwellings.
2. **'Clean for the Queen' – to consider dates of village cleaning sessions** – It was suggested to hold a cleaning session on Saturday, 21st May or during the half term school holiday. The Clerk will email ECDC to book the litter-picking equipment.
3. **Parishioners' concerns regarding tractors speeding through Lt Downham and dripping insecticide** - Concern was expressed to the Council regarding the speed of some tractors through the village and the dripping of pesticides in the streets. Two main areas of concern are where vehicles stop outside the store and the school. The Council agreed it was not safe and will ask local farmers, as in accordance with the Use of Pesticides regulations, that their employees or contractors ensure that pesticide tanks are shut off tight and the pipes are not left dripping. The Council requested that farm vehicles and other large vehicles are driven more considerately through the villages. If safe to do so, parishioners are requested to note vehicle registration numbers if they require the police to look into any issues.

183/15 HIGHWAYS, PARISH PATHS & BYWAYS

1. **Replies re matters reported from previous meetings** – None.
2. **To report current matters of concern:**
 - 2.1 **California, Lt Downham** – Pothole outside Beald House.
 - 2.2 **Chapel Lane, Lt Downham** – Cars are parking on the designated path again.
 - 2.3 **Cophall Drove, Lt Downham** – Potholes outside Heathersett.
 - 2.4 **Cannon Street, Lt Downham** – Hedge encroaching the footway at No. 54.
 - 2.5 **Fourth Drove, Lt Downham** – Repeated request that the Drove needs surface work because it is uneven and standard cars 'ground out'.
 - 2.6 **Bus Stop outside the Village Hall, Main Street, Lt Downham** – The designated area is considered too big and restricts parking outside the village hall. The Clerk was asked to enquire if it is of regulation size.
3. **Pond Lane Street Lights** – Concern was expressed by parishioners that it is very dark in places on Pond Lane and the footway is uneven. CCC Highways officer couldn't see anything on the footway that needs emergency attention, but would look to try and make some improvements after April. The Clerk was instructed to obtain quotes for upgrading the Parish Council bracket light and the cost to install a new streetlight column.

184/15 REQUEST OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION – None.

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

Signed (Chairman) Date