

**MINUTES of a meeting of Little Downham Parish Council held in the Village Hall,  
Main Street, Little Downham, on Thursday, 26 May 2016 commencing at 7.00pm.**

**Councillors present:** JL Waters, in the chair, and JW Barker, CE Hall, LEA Joel, RS Martin, MM Oldfield, G Ord, BL Taylor, GH Taylor, and KO Winters. **Clerk:** Mrs J Wardle

**Other attendees:** Dist. Cllr M Bradley and two parishioners.

**Opening Remarks:** The Chairman welcomed Cllr Ord to the meeting. The Clerk confirmed that Cllr Ord had formally signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**16/16** **TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – Cllr MAC Seidler, Dist Cllr A Bailey and County Cllr L Dupre.

**17/16** **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

1. **Cllr RS Martin** declared an interest in item 22/16.2.2 (Application 16/00483/FUL) because he has an interest in adjoining property. (Declaration 019-2016).

**18/16** **PUBLIC FORUM** – no comments

**19/16** **COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

1. County Cllr Dupre provided a report in her absence. She reported that the Government was giving serious consideration to the prospect of a Cambridgeshire-Peterborough devolution deal and a Norfolk-Suffolk devolution deal. Both CCC and ECDC have meetings on 28/06/16 to decide whatever deal is on the table. CCC has decided not to implement the budget decision to cease its 50% support to concessionary fares for community transport 'Dial-a-Ride' journeys. The cost will be met from reserves for the current financial year. CCC agreed a motion calling for options studies and joint working with neighbouring authorities on the potential for upgrading the A10 from Cambridge to Kings Lynn. The Council has agreed to receive a report from the Chief Executive on the possibility of moving the location of its activities out of Shire Hall. The Government has performed what is described as a 'Z-turn' on its announcement that all schools will become academies by 2020. It will force this where local authorities consistently fail to meet minimum performance thresholds across its schools or can no longer viably support remaining schools because too many have become academies. The Boundary Commission launched a further consultation on the final proposals for the County Council boundaries, which were condemned when published in February. Proposals were invited for boundaries for eight single-councillor divisions in East Cambs.
2. Dist. Cllr Bradley reported on the District Council's view of the Boundary Commission proposals. ECDC considered Littleport West to be vast and proposed that it be a two-member ward with the split being at Sutton. For obvious reasons County Cllr Dupre and Sutton Parish Council are not happy with the proposal. The District Leisure Centre is on target and final plans will be considered at the June planning meeting. Work is well under way on the Downham Road Cinema, which is due to open in September.

7.11pm Dist. Cllr Bradley was thanked for his report and left.

**20/16** **TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

1. **Resolved unanimously that the minutes of 21 April 2016 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.**
2. **Resolved unanimously that the minutes of 12 May 2016 AGM be signed by the Chairman as a true record.**
3. **Resolved unanimously that the minutes of 12 May 2016 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.**

**21/16** **MATTERS TO REPORT**

1. **(Min.177/15.3) Circus Tyana on Lt Downham Recreation field** – The Circus held shows on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> May before leaving on the 4<sup>th</sup>. It is believed that attendance was quite good, although there was a report of calling on local residents for water. The Clerk emailed Mr Christian to enquire about the situation, but received no reply. There has been no communication from Mr Christian to inform of how the event went or to thank the Council for free use of the field.

2. **(Min.179/15.2 and non-agenda item 2 12/05/16) Zipwire Project in Lt Downham Play Area** – In brief, the ‘snaky’ concrete path in the play area was in the way of the Zipwire location and, in error, had not been taken into consideration by the Sovereign design team. To enable the project to go ahead that week, the Clerk consulted with the Chairman (Financial Regulations 11.1 (c) i), and it was agreed that the Council would pay an additional £500 + VAT to have the 26m concrete path broken up and removed. The play area was closed to the public for health and safety reasons. Due to the additional work and excess land water, the grand opening on 28/05/16 was postponed and rearranged to be held on Fete day, 04/06/16. Notices around the play area, on notice boards and the Facebook Little Downham Notice Board would update the community and advertise the new formal opening. In addition, an unused camera was installed near the kitchen door of the Pavilion to face the Zipwire, which was not covered by any other cameras.
3. **(Min.182/15.2 and non-agenda item 3 12/05/16) Clean for the Queen** – Thanks were expressed to seven adults and four children who gave an hour and half of their time on the morning of 21/05/16 to pick up litter all around Little Downham. Their hard work resulted in collecting eight bags of litter. It was decided to hold the event twice a year and borrow equipment from ECDC.
4. **(Min.05/16) Appointments** – It was noted that Cllr Ord had agreed to be a member of the Pavilion Working Group.
5. **(Min.15/16.2) ECDC Parish Conference 12pm on 15/06/16 re Emergency Planning** – ECDC extended an invitation to the event due its importance. Clerk expressed an interest to attend.
6. **(Min.5/16.5) Lt Downham Youth Group** – Carol Hebbard thanked the Council for its enquiry and reported that the Youth Club was doing really well. Its first performance was held on 07/05/16 and 42 people attended. The Club restarted the term on 14/05/16 with 12 youngsters and further marketing would be put in place. Plans have been put forward to hold physical theatre sessions, sound workshops, lighting workshops etc. A DVD was being edited from the show and all previous rehearsals. The Parish Council will be given a copy for members to view.

## 22/16 PLANNING MATTERS

1. **East Cambs Local Plan representations and suggested development sites (Min.167/15.2)** - ECDC had processed representations from the public consultation that closed 24/03/16 and prepared special maps for each settlement highlighting all sites suggested to ECDC. Parish Councils are asked to offer their views on each suggested site, or let ECDC know anything about each site that it was locally aware of. This would help ECDC to process and determine which sites to propose as an allocation, and which sites to reject. More information of this process would be explained at the East Cambs Local Plan Parish Conference on 02/06/16. ECDC’s target is to agree a set of preferred allocations at a Full Council meeting in October 2016 and then hold a public consultation during November / December 2016. All members of the Council were issued with copies of the suggested sites maps. The deadline for comments is 11/07/16.

7.35pm One parishioner left.

### 2. **Planning correspondence**

- 2.1 **16/00262/FUL** GS Developments, Site Adjacent to Thistle Croft Pymoor Lane Pymoor - Proposed 4 bed dwelling and garage  
**Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.**
- 2.2 **16/00483/FUL** Mr A & Mrs L McEnaney, Beald House California Little Downham - Change of use of one bedroom flat above garage from holiday let to be used as a permanent residential dwelling (Retrospective)  
**Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.**

## 23/16 FINANCE

1. **Monthly Internal Audit** was carried out by Cllrs CE Hall and GH Taylor.
2. **Cambridgeshire Lowland Search and Rescue (CamSAR) – donation request** – It was proposed by Cllr KO Winters and seconded by Cllr CE Hall to donate £200.  
**Resolved unanimously to approve a donation of £200 to CamSAR under S137, Local Government Act 1972.**

3. **ECDC notification of £2904.76 Rural Services Grants for Little Downham and Pymoor** – ECDC informed that Little Downham and Pymoor were allocated £2904.76 each from the £122,000 Rural Service Grant to fund rural initiatives. Two conditions applied to the grant;
  1. The funds must be spent on initiatives that would benefit each community respectively;
  2. The Council must report to ECDC on how the funds were spent.
 Initial thoughts were to provide additional seats on each recreation field. It was agreed to defer the matter for further thought.
  
- 4 **To approve bills and other items for payment** - It was proposed by Cllr CE Hall and seconded by Cllr GH Taylor that the list of payments be approved. It was agreed unanimously to give an appreciation gift of £100 to Mr R Sear for daily locking and unlocking Lt Downham Recreation Area gate during the past year.  
**Resolved unanimously to approve the payments of cheque nos. 001071 to 001074, and BACS payments 448 to 453 for the total sum of £9360.99.**

#### 24/16 **COUNCIL MATTERS**

1. **Parish Council Insurance:**
  - 1.1 **Review insurance values** – It was agreed to form a working group of Cllrs CE Hall, MM Oldfield, JL Waters and the Clerk to review the insurance values and report back to the council.
  - 1.2 **Review Fidelity Guarantee** – The Working Group will the Fidelity Guarantee too.
  
2. **To appoint one Downham Feoffees Parish Council Representative** – It was noted that Cllrs G Ord and MAC Seidler were eligible to be Feoffees' representatives. It was proposed by Cllr KO Winters and seconded by Cllr BL Taylor to appoint Cllr G Ord.  
**Resolved unanimously to appoint Cllr G Ord as a Downham Feoffees Parish Council Representative for the remainder of the four-year term expiring May 2019.**
  
3. **To formally adopt Working Group Terms of Reference:**
  - 3.1 **Cemetery Working Group** – It was proposed by Cllr LEA Joel and seconded by Cllr M Oldfield.  
**Resolved unanimously to approved the Cemetery Working Group Terms of Reference.**
  - 3.2 **Pavilion Working Group** – It was proposed by Cllr LEA Joel and seconded by Cllr CE Hall.  
**Resolved unanimously to approved the Pavilion Working Group Terms of Reference.**
  
4. **Lt Downham Pension Scheme - Auto Enrolment – report by Cllrs LEA Joel and MM Oldfield** – It was reported that the Clerk is eligible for auto-enrolment and is already in the Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire Local Government Pension Scheme, of which the Parish Council makes contributions. The current scheme meets the qualifying criteria of auto-enrolment. The Parish Council Handyman and the Book Café Manager are not eligible for auto-enrolment because their earnings are below the lower level of qualifying earnings. Currently there is not a need for the Parish Council to consider new appointments to a pension scheme.  
**Resolved unanimously to review pension schemes, such as NEST, when existing or new staff become eligible for auto-enrolment or request to join a pension scheme.**
  
5. **Whole Council Code of Conduct and New Councillor Training** – CAPALC new councillor training sessions consisted of three 2-hour sessions and covered Code of Conduct and various other topics. The Clerk was instructed to enquire of available dates of Thursdays in September and October.

#### 25/16 **PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND ASSETS**

1. **To review Pavilion Fire Extinguishers and Annual Service** – It was noted that the two extinguishers and the 10-year service contract with Chubb had expired. Three quotes were considered to replace the foam and water extinguishers and to carry out annual services. It was proposed by Cllr JW Barker and seconded by Cllr KO Winters to appoint Chubb Fire & Security Ltd to provide new extinguishers and service them annually. **A vote result was: In favour - 8, Against - 1, Abstention - 1.**  
**Resolved unanimously to appoint Chubb Fire & Security Ltd to provide new extinguishers @ £45 + VAT each and to service them annually.**

#### 26/16 **PARISH MATTERS**

1. **Concerns regarding the Downham Feoffees School current status and future provision** – The prospect of large development in the parish over the next 20 years to meet district housing

needs raised concerns of how the school would accommodate all catchment area children. Cllr Joel reported that 31 children will start school in September 2016, but six could not be accommodated. It is not as simple as building one new classroom, as it is unlikely that all new children will be of the same age. The hall and kitchen would also need to be increased. Cllr Joel would enquire with County Cllr Dupre regarding the LEA 'bigger picture'.

2. **Local Government Boundary Commission – Electoral Review of Cambridgeshire: New Draft recommendations** – The Council had no suggestion of where a split of the proposed Littleport West Division should be to form two single- member Divisions, so decided not to submit a comment.
3. **Lt Downham Organs & Bygones Event 25/03/17- request to stand tractors, Land Rovers and vintage cars on the recreation area car park and field** – The Council requested more information of what the event planned to hold in the recreation area.
4. **Conservation Group Representative Report – Cllr JW Barker** – Cllr Barker reported that the Bees have been active and swarming during the past month but are now back in the hives. Myles Meadow fence is being looked at because it is in a poor condition and the ditch needs doing. The Littleport & Downham Drainage Board is to look at 'Fred Mulley's' dyke bank in order to make the path safe.
5. **ECDC Street Trading - Mick's Plaice – Stopping locations in Lt Downham and Pymoor** – The Council had no objection to the licence application and proposed stops.

#### 27/16 **HIGHWAYS, PARISH PATHS & BYWAYS**

1. **Replies re matters reported from previous meetings:**
  - 1.1 **(Min. 154/15.2) Potholes** in California and Cophall Drove, Lt Downham are to be filled.
  - 1.2 **(Min. 154/15.2.3) Chapel Lane cars parking on designated footway** - PCSO Jonathan Hall said he would take a look again at the parking and consult the Highways Officer.
  - 1.3 **(Min. 183/15.2.4) Hedge encroachment Cannon Street and Chapel Lane** – The Highways Officer reported that there was a visibility issue and that cards requesting that the hedges are cut back had been put through the doors of No. 54 adjacent to the junction and also No. 52, as that was overgrowing the footway and limiting passage too
  - 1.4 **(Min. 183/15.2.5) Fourth Drove** – The Drove has been put forward for the Retread process and hopefully should be approved for 2017-18. The highways officer drove along it at approx 25mph and, although it is uneven and undulates, her car did not 'ground out'. The worst section is outside the first property where the surface is 'scabby' and there is a big dip there, but no potholes of intervention level. If this area deteriorates further then she may have to do some interim patching but hopefully it will last until the retread is done next year.
  - 1.5 **(Min. 183/15.3) Pond Lane Path** – The Highways officer has ordered for the worst areas to be re-laid (125sqm) from No 4 down to Cannon St and patching the cracked areas at the junction with Holme Lane. She has also asked if the path could be re-laid more level so not such a steep camber, if at all possible. The Clerk is still waiting for Street light costs from Balfour Beatty.
2. **To report current matters of concern:**
  - 2.1 **Lawn Lane, Lt Downham** – Request the handyman to strim around the Post Box, clean Algae off the Interactive Speed Sign and clean the Black Bank Road sign at Church Green. The Clerk was instructed to write to the landowner of the hedge situated between California and the Post Box to request that it be cut back at the end of July when the birds have finished nesting.
  - 2.2 **Chapel Lane, Lt Downham** – Potholes outside No. 4 need filling.
  - 2.3 **Holme Lane, Lt Downham** – It was reported that a Veolia refuse lorry reversed into the street nameplate at Chapel Lane end. The nameplate is not damaged but it stands wonky.
  - 2.4 **Footpath No. 21 between Eagles Lane and the Recreation Area, Lt Downham** – Following observation on CCTV footage of a vehicle entering the recreation at midnight via the footpath, it was decided to install a second bollard to restrict future vehicular access.
3. **Network Rail - Anglia Level Crossing Reduction Strategy – Proposed closure of crossings at Furlong Drove and Coffue Drove** – The Clerk reported of objections from some parishioners and the Conservation Group to the proposed closure of A Furlong Drove, which forms part of the Hereward Way Walk. No objections had been received regarding the Coffue Drove closure, where people can walk under the railway line. Cllrs RS Martin and KO Winters volunteered to attend the pre-meeting and exhibition on 08/06/16 at Littleport Village Hall.

9.23pm One parishioner left.

**28/16 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 29/16, 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.**

**29/16 PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND ASSETS**

1. **Cemetery Working Group Report** – The Working Group met at 56A Cannon Street on 23/05/16 to discuss options of new cemetery land. From the meeting, Cllr Joel had sent a location map to ECDC of two potential areas for free pre-planning advice regarding their suitability and any other information that the Council needs to consider. A third area of land had been suggested but she was not aware of its exact location before sending off the pre-planning enquiry. Cllr Joel had also emailed Cheffins to enquire of any potential land for sale and was waiting for a reply. It was suggested that if the Working Group could not find any suitable land for a new cemetery, then the council should write to the church to strongly suggest it enquires about re-burials.

**Non-agenda items:**

1. **Witchford Colts FC – request to use new larger goals at Lt Downham Recreation Field** - WCFC middle pitch team was entering the next age bracket (U18) and required larger goals. They were happy to purchase the goals but requested permission to dig new holes for the posts to stand in. They would like to work on this before matches begin in August. The Council had no objection to the request.
2. **Mr Ison - Email expressing concerns regarding cattle grazing in Myles Meadow** – As a health and safety issue, this was brought to the Council's attention. Mr Ison was not happy that cattle were grazing in the Meadow again. In brief, he said he had been in the field twice and on both occasions felt threatened by cattle charged at him when walking his dog in the field, that there was a lack of signage informing of the cattle and the cattle were a health hazard. He had also complained to the cattle owner. The Clerk was instructed to speak to the owner about the cattle and arrange extra signage to inform the public of cattle in the Meadow.

**30/16 REQUEST OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION - None**

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.36 pm.

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