

**MINUTES of a meeting of Little Downham Parish Council held in the Village Hall,  
Main Street, Little Downham, on Thursday, 28 July 2016 commencing at 7.00pm.**

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

**Other attendees:** Dist. Cllr A Bailey and seven parishioners.

**53/16** **TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – Cllrs CE Hall and MM Oldfield, Dist. Cllr M Bradley and County Cllr L Dupre.

**54/16** **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

1. No declarations were made at this time.
2. Late declaration made prior to item 66/16 - **Cllr RS Martin** declared a prejudicial interest in item 66/16 (Lt Downham Cemetery Committee Expenses Grant) because he is a Superintendent of the Cemetery – (Declaration 025-2016).

**55/16** **PUBLIC FORUM**

1. Seven parishioners expressed concerns regarding item 59/16.1.2 (Application 16/00795/FUL). The concerns related to the lack of parking in Orchard Estate near the entrance to the proposed development, the height of the proposed dwelling and that the high level windows could result in the loss of privacy in their gardens.

**56/16** **COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

1. Dist. Cllr Bailey reported that the Cinema development was progressing on Downham Road, Ely, and the underpass would be started next week. ECDC had approved the plans for the adjacent Leisure Centre and, with the finance and management packages in place, work had begun on site. ECDC had no plans to increase parking costs at its Angel Drove car park or the recently purchased new commuter car park on The Dock. Central Government had confirmed its support for the Ely Southern Bypass by granting funds of £16m. The build contract for the Bypass had been awarded and it should be completed by the end of 2017. The Devolution Deal for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough was currently out for public consultation and everyone was encouraged to give their views. Plans recently leaked by a whistle-blower that the Clinical Commissioning Group is to close three minor injuries units (MIUs) in Cambridgeshire at Ely, Wisbech and Doddington, have attracted considerable public opposition and anxiety. Due to the prospect of many more new houses in the Ely area and some options being 'on the table', Dist. Cllr Bailey has arranged to meet with the Care Group to emphasize a strong need to retain the Ely MIU and to maintain services at the Princess of Wales site.
2. In her absence, County Cllr Lorna Dupre's report informed that the CCC General Purposes Committee had approved the 'Total Transport' pilot scheme and that CCC is hosting the booking and information centre. It was proposed that a Downham User Group be established for the Lt Downham 125 service, which from January will no longer serve Coveney. Highways England had issued a notice to proceed with construction of the A14 upgrade, which will take place in six phases from 2016 to 2020. Cambridge City Deal has launched a consultation, which closes 10/10/16, and asks for views on an 'eight-point package of measures to tackle congestion' in Cambridge. Peak-time Congestion Control Points are proposed with automatic number plate recognition cameras located at fixed points in the city. Drivers passing those points in peak hours would be subject to a £60 fine. The County Council has decided to continue its current arrangement of sharing a chief executive with Peterborough Council. Cllr Dupre informed of 'Meet your Councillor' sessions in the Book Café on 12/08/16, 05/09/16, 12/10/16, 11/11/16 and 05/12/16, as well as her usual Sutton sessions.

**57/16** **TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

1. **Resolved unanimously that the minutes of 30 June 2016 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.**

**58/16** **MATTERS TO REPORT**

1. **(Min.43/16.1) Zipwire Project – Update** – The Heras fence was removed on 20/07/16 and the Zipwire was opened for public use. Groundworks has released £7500 (75%) of the Tesco Bags of Help grant into the Council's account. With work now completed, the Clerk would be able to claim the remaining £2500 grant. Feedback was that the children enjoy playing on the Zipwire.

2. **(Min.163/15.3) Rural Payments Agency Basic Payment Scheme 2015** – RPA wrote to inform that the Council had below the minimum claim size of 5 ha and was not eligible to claim. The Clerk reported that she disagreed with the decision and wrote in reply with proof of the council's eligible land, which amounted to 5.36 ha. It was believed that the problem was with RPA and the long delay it took to process the transfer of Myles Meadow entitlement in 2015.
3. **(Min.21/16.2) CCTV in Lt Downham Recreation Area** – Crawford Associates re-aligned three cameras to obtain better footage of the Zipwire area. A new camera was installed in the Pavilion porch to obtain footage of vehicles driving recklessly on the field.
4. **(Min.47/16.2) Parish Council Grass Cutting** – It was reported that Truelink Ltd had done a much better job of grass cutting on 04/07/16, following the unsatisfactory work on 14/06/16.
5. **Dog Fouling on Holme Lane** – A local resident wrote to complain about the excessive dog fouling on the road and verge and that some people leave the dog poo bags hanging on trees or in bushes. She asked that the Council include a reminder in the parish magazine requesting dog walkers to be responsible and clean up after their dogs. The Council approved the request.

#### 59/16 **PLANNING MATTERS**

##### 1. **Planning correspondence -**

- 1.1 **11600792/PDR** Mr A Saby & Ms M Stevenson, 10 Martins Lane, Lt Downham – Garage conversion. Concern was expressed for the loss of potential parking in the garage and the amount of parking on the narrow street caused by neighbours having already converted their garages. A vote result that the Parish Council had no concerns was: 5 In favour and 4 Against.  
**Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.**

- 1.2 **16/00795/FUL** Mr & Mrs A Youngman Land adjacent 24 Kiln Close Little Downham - Erection of new 4 bedroom dwelling and double garage. Aerial photographs of the site were shown to the Council.

**Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had concerns regarding this application and recommended outright refusal for the following reasons:**

1. **Overdevelopment of the site** – The proposed dwelling is considered to have a cramped appearance within the site and is inappropriate for this location.
2. **Out of keeping with adjacent dwellings and the local area** – The proposed back land development will be visually intrusive to adjacent properties due to its size, height and bulk. Residents of the adjacent bungalows have concerns that they will be overlooked and will lose the privacy of their gardens.
3. **Access and Parking Concerns** – The Parish Council is aware of the lack of parking spaces and existing congested parking issues in Orchard Estate and especially in front of the narrow access to Nos. 20a, 20b and the proposed site. It is considered that delivery and construction vehicles relating to the proposed development will have a detrimental effect on many local residents, as well as the inevitable future increase of vehicles to and from the four-bedroom property when inhabited.
4. **Tree Preservation Order on Trees of the development site** – It is understood that trees on the development site had TPOs on them. Recent photographs of the development site show that all trees have been removed and the site has been cleared of all vegetation, which together has resulted in a devastating impact on the local wildlife (birds, bats and owls etc.) of the area.
5. **Outside the development envelope** – Although this is not a reason for refusal on its own, it is observed that the development site is outside of the development envelope of Orchard Estate and Lawn Lane.

##### **Additional comment:**

6. The Parish Council considered its comments following representations from seven local residents attending the council meeting and expressing objections to the application.

##### **For information only:**

- 1.3 ECDC: Applications approved: 16/00035/FUL, 16/00209/FUL, 16/00478/FUL, 16/00483/FUL,
- 1.4 ECDC: Applications refused: 16/00263/OUT

8.16pm Dist. Cllr Bailey and seven parishioners left the meeting.

**60/16 FINANCE**

1. **Monthly Internal Audit** was carried out by Cllr LEA Joel and BL Taylor.

8.20pm Cllr KO Winters left the meeting.

2. **To formally receive and approve NJC National Salary Award 2016-2018** – The National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) reached agreement on a 1% increased new pay scales for 2016-2017 to be implemented immediately and backdated to 01/04/16, and another 1% increased pay scale for 2017-2018 to be implemented from 01/04/17. The new pay scales for clerks employed under the terms of the model contract were agreed by NALC and SLCC. It was proposed by Cllr GH Taylor, seconded by Cllr LEA Joel and agreed unanimously to approve the proposed rates as recommended jointly by NALC and SLCC.

**Resolved unanimously to adopt the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) National Salary Award 2016-2018, to approve the new 2016-17 pay scale for the Parish Clerk backdated to 01/04/2016 and to approve the new 2017-18 pay scale that will apply as from 01/04/2017.**

8.23pm Cllr KO Winters returned to the meeting.

3. **To formally minute and approve the following items:**

- 3.1 **The purchase of a CCTV Winch for the play area camera pole** – The cameras in the play area needed cleaning and being redirected to view the Zipwire. The original winch could not be found and was now believed to have been stolen with CCTV equipment when the Pavilion was broken into in November 2011.

- 3.2 **Donation from Ray Pritchard for a memorial seat to Maureen Barnes in Community Orchard** - Mr Pritchard gave a donation of £417 for an Oak seat by MJ Elliott in memory of his friend, Maureen, who lived in the village and died September 2015. The Council formally approved the purchase and installation of the seat in the Community Orchard, where he and Maureen had each planted a tree. The Conservation Group had suggested the seat's location.

- 3.3 **A two-weeks extension of the Zipwire Heras Fencing from TP Cambridge** – In order to allow the grass seed to germinate, the fencing was hired for a further two weeks.

**Resolved unanimously to formally minute and approve the purchase of the CCTV Winch @ £250 + VAT, the purchase and installation of a Memorial Seat to Maureen Barnes @ £417 + VAT, and the additional two-week extension of the Zipwire Heras Fencing from TP @ £90 including VAT.**

4. **To approve bills and other items for payment** - It was proposed by Cllr LEA Joel and seconded by Cllr BL Taylor.

**Resolved unanimously to approve BACS payments 472 – 486 and Direct Debit for the total sum of £9154.63.**

**61/16 PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND ASSETS**

1. **To approve a 5-year contract with Chubb Fire & Security Ltd for service of Pavilion Extinguishers (Min.47/16.1)** – Chubb informed that if the contract was reduced to a 3-year term, each annual service would cost more. However, it confirmed that the minimum term without incurring any penalties is three years; therefore the Council could terminate the 5-year contract after 3 years without incurring any extra charges.

**Resolved to approve the 5-year contract with Chubb Fire & Security Ltd for service of the Pavilion Extinguishers and to review the contract after three years.**

2. **D Wright & A Barrett – request to place a geocache in the Local Nature Reserve** – A Geocache is a small container that is hidden in a location for other people to find via GPS coordinates obtained from a Geocache website. The activity is for people to explore, find and log the geocaches anywhere in the world and tell others of their experience. Following a presentation at the Conservation Group meeting on 27/07/16, Mike England (Chair of the Conservation Group) confirmed that the volunteers had no objections to a container being hidden in the Cartshed. It would increase visitors to the Local Nature Reserve.

**Resolved unanimously to approve the request by Mr D Wright and Miss A Barrett to place a Geocache in the Cartshed at the Local Nature Reserve.**

3. **Discover Your Mojo events in Lt Downham Recreation Area (Cllr JL Waters)** – Discover Your Mojo (DYM) would provide Bouncy Castle type activities for children of various ages. Cllr Waters proposed that the Parish Council permit DYM to use the Pavilion and field free of charge for planned events to be held during the summer school holidays. DYM would charge £5 per child per day and provide the staff (all DBS checked), equipment and advertising. The equipment would be run from generators; they have insurance cover for all events and would provide refreshments at an extra charge. Events could be held on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> August with a possible two more events in the month. The aim would be to provide activities for the children and encourage community use of the Pavilion.

**Resolved unanimously to permit Discover Your Mojo to use the Pavilion and recreation field free of charge on planned dates for children’s activities during the school summer holidays.**

The Council will review the events at its September meeting.

4. **To consider the purchase of a Tango Swing in Lt Downham Play Area** – Some young mums requested a Tango swing seat in Lt Downham play area. It is a kidney shaped seat that can accommodate an adult and a toddler (2-5 yrs). The seat is currently on offer from Hags SMP @ £366 (includes delivery). The council instructed the Clerk to obtain costs for a frame and seat.

5. **To consider the purchase of cardio equipment in Lt Downham Recreation Area** – In order to encourage people to be outdoors and exercise, it was suggested to install cardio exercise equipment around the recreation field. A long discussion followed on funding and refurbishment of the Pavilion. The Clerk was instructed to obtain cardio equipment quotes. It was decided to arrange a site visit of the Pavilion during the Council meeting on 18/08/16, whereby the Council could assess its condition and make a decision on remedial work.

**Pymoor Play Area** - It was reported that at times some safety tiles are under water. The Clerk and Chairman will visit to assess the situation.

6. **To consider All Weather Court reduced fees for under 16s during summer school holidays** It was agreed to have the same low fee arrangement as last year.

**Resolved unanimously that children aged 16 years and under may hire the All Weather Court for £1 per hour during the summer school holidays between 10 am to 5 pm.**

#### 62/16 **PARISH MATTERS**

1. **CAMRA National Campaign to Register Pubs as Assets of Community Value (ACV)** – Due to the lateness of the meeting, this item was deferred to the September meeting.
2. **To consider producing a Parish Council Newsletter (Cllr JL Waters)** – Cllr Waters proposed that the council considered the provision of a parish newsletter and new website. The current website is well populated and informative, but is considered outdated. A new website could be used by tablets and mobiles, with drop-down menus, interactive blogs and calendar. The Clerk was given specifications and instructed to obtain quotes for the September meeting.
3. **ECDC Parish Conference on Emergency Planning- Reports by Cllrs MM Oldfield & KO Winters** - Due to the lateness of the meeting, this item was deferred to the September meeting.

#### 63/16 **HIGHWAYS, PARISH PATHS & BYWAYS**

1. **Replies re matters reported from previous meetings**
  - 1.1 **Third Drove, Lt Downham (Min.49/16.2.1)** – The Clerk reported that the owner agreed to cut back the overhanging branches when the birds have finished nesting.
  - 1.2 **One Hundred Foot Bank, Lt Downham (Min.49/16.2.2)** – The Highways officer reported that she had spoken to the tenant of the adjacent land and the trees would be trimmed back. The tenant does not want to remove the trees.
  - 1.3 **Footpath No. 23 (Min.49/16.2.3)** - The Clerk confirmed that the landowner had trimmed the footpath. Thanks were also expressed to Mr Oldfield for trimming some brambles and hedge that reduced the width of some footpaths near the recreation area.
2. **To report current matters of concern**
  - 2.1 **Main Street, Lt Downham** – Reports of a motorcycle regularly driving at speed around 6.00 am. The clerk was given a registration number to pass on to the police.

**64/16 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

10.07pm 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 65/16 & 66/16, 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.

**65/16 PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND ASSETS**

- 1. **Holts Meadow Hay – Tenders** – No applications were received, although the Chairman and the Clerk had been told of people that might be interested.  
**Resolved unanimously that the Chairman and the Clerk follow up on the people interested and arrange for the hay in Holts Meadow to be cut before mid August.**

10.15pm Prior to the next item being discussed, **Cllr RS Martin** declared a prejudicial interest and left the meeting because he is a Superintendant of the Cemetery (Declaration 025-2016).

**66/16 FINANCE**

- 1. **Lt Downham Cemetery Committee Expenses Grant** – The Treasurer of the Cemetery Committee answered the Council’s questions about the cemetery expenses and provided a copy of the Cemetery end of year accounts and current bank balances. The Clerk provided the Council will a breakdown of the grant payments given in the past two years. It was noted that the Council’s grant covered the general expenditure of the cemetery and that the Committee was holding sufficient funds to cover the cost of its own expenses for at least a couple of years.  
**Resolved unanimously to reject the grant request from Lt Downham Cemetery Committee and not contribute towards the cemetery expenses for the following reasons:**
  - **The Cemetery Committee has enough funds to be able to cover its own expenses for a minimum of two years, if not three;**
  - **When the cemetery closes the committee funds will not be passed to the parish council;**
  - **When the current cemetery is closed, the continued maintenance of the cemetery will not be carried out by the Church, but by East Cambs District Council who maintains the churchyard.**

10.29pm The meeting was re-opened to the public. Cllr Martin had gone home.

**67/16 REQUEST OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION - None**

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 10.30 pm.

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