

**MINUTES of a meeting of Little Downham Parish Council held in the Village Hall,
Main Street, Little Downham, on Thursday, 21 September 2017 commencing at 7.00 pm.**

Councillors present: JL Waters, in the chair, and JW Barker, CE Hall, GJ Hayter-Smith, MM Oldfield, MAC Seidler, BL Taylor, GH Taylor, and KO Winters. **Clerk:** Mrs J Wardle

Other attendees: 12 parishioners.

74/17 TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Cllr RS Martin and G Ord, Dist. Cllr A Bailey and County Cllr L Dupre.

75/17 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. **Cllr JW Barker** declared a prejudicial interest in item 79/17 (Application 17/01550/FUM) because the applicant was his son. (Declaration 019-2017).
2. **Cllr CE Hall** declared a prejudicial interest in item 79/17.1.1 (Application 17/00733/FUM) because some members of her family part own the land. (Declaration 020-2017).
3. **Cllr GJ Hayter-Smith** declared a personal interest in item 79/17.1.5 (Application 17/01553/FUL) because the applicant was a friend. (Declaration 021-2017).
4. **Cllr BL Taylor** declared a prejudicial interest (Declaration 022-2017):
5. **Cllr GH Taylor** declared a prejudicial interest (Declaration 023-2017): in item 79/17.1.3 (Application 17/01440/FUL) because the applicant is a tenant.
6. **Cllr JL Waters** declared a personal interest in item 79/17.1.5 (Application 17/01553/FUL) because the applicant was a friend. (Declaration 024-2017).
7. **Cllr KO Winters** declared a prejudicial interest in item 79/17 (Application 17/01550/FUM) because the applicant was his nephew. (Declaration 025-2017).

76/17 PUBLIC FORUM

Mr G Frankland expressed objections relating to item 79/17.1.3. Mr Joy commented on the amended plans of item 79/17.1.1 expressing concern regarding CCC Highways' response. He was pleased that the applicant had taken local comments into consideration and moved the access of the development from Cannon Street to Ely Road.

77/17 TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

1. **Resolved that the minutes of 17 August 2017 were correct and to be signed by the Chairman as a true record.**

78/17 MATTERS TO REPORT

1. **(Min.56/17.2) appointment of internal auditor for the year ending 31/03/18** – Caroline Wallace gladly accepted the position and confirmed it would be her final year.
2. **(Min.69/17.2) To approve purchase of a new dog bin at upper Townsend** – The bin has been installed and is in use. ECDC have been asked to empty it each week.

79/17 PLANNING MATTERS

1. **Planning correspondence -**
7.15pm Cllr CE Hall left the meeting

- 1.1 **17/00733/FUM** Mr Ian Hale, Works adjacent to 7 Cannon Street, Lt Downham – Construction of 11no. four bedroom, 9no. three bedroom, 7no. two bedroom dwellings & associated works – **AMENDMENT** – amended layout and houses, additional information received included ecology appraisal. In addition to the concerns expressed in the formal comment below, concern was expressed that people might reverse out of the four parking bays on Cannon Street and therefore the spaces should be removed. **A recorded vote to retain the additional parking spaces and not request that they be removed resulted as follows: In favour - (4) Cllrs GJ Hayter-Smith, MM Oldfield, MAC Seidler, JL Waters, Against – (4) Cllrs JW Barker, BL Taylor, GH Taylor, KO Winters. Due to the equal number of votes, the Chairman used a second and casting vote to vote in favour of the proposal. The final result was: In favour – 5, Against - 4.**
The Council's formal comment to ECDC was as follows:

Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had concerns regarding this application and unanimously recommended amendments to the scheme for the following reasons:

1. **Width of roads** – Strong concerns were raised again that the proposed 5m width of the roads and private service drives are not wide enough for the anticipated number of vehicles associated with the proposed number and size of the dwellings. It is recommended that the roads are widened to 6m in width, which could be accommodated by setting the building line back by 1m to allow more space for road width and parking for residents and visitors.

A prime example of insufficient road width and parking in a residential site of 23 dwellings can be seen 400 yards west along Cannon Street at Oak Farm Drive. Access is severely restricted for local residents and visitors on the unadopted site road due to the insufficient allocation of off-street parking and the narrowness of the road. More seriously, it restricts emergency vehicles and delivery vehicles.

2. **Parking concerns** - It is noted that 18 parking spaces have been allocated as an addition to the two parking spaces per dwellings (54). However; with the dwellings ranging from 2 to 4 bedrooms in size, it is calculated that in practice at least an additional 27 vehicles will belong to the occupiers of the dwellings and further parking spaces would be required for visitors. Drivers would inevitably park vehicles on part of the footways, which would restrict pedestrian access. Access through the site would be restricted by on-street parking and result in a cramped appearance of the site, hindering access by emergency, delivery and refuse vehicles.

3. **Refuse collection point for dwellings 19, 20 and 21** – There doesn't appear to be a bin collection point for these dwellings, which are served by a private service drive close to the entrance of the site. Concern is that black bags and wheelie bins would amass and overspill in front of one dwelling and have a detrimental effect on the residents living there.

A prime example of no refuse collection point on an unadopted road in a residential site of 23 dwellings can be seen 400 yards west along Cannon Street in Oak Farm Drive. Refuse collections, generally held on Tuesday mornings, result in the entrance of Oak Farm Drive being severely congested with black bins bags and wheelie bins.

4. **On-site maintenance and management of the site** – It is recommended that where roads, paths, open spaces and play equipment etc. are not adopted by the County or District Authorities as applicable, conditions and arrangements are made for them to be maintained by a management company/committee and funded by the occupiers of the site dwellings. This is to ensure that the new site does not have a financial impact on other residents of the parish.

Additional comments:

5. The Parish Council greatly appreciated the applicants' cooperation in amending the access road to off Ely Road instead of Cannon Street.
6. The Parish Council considered its comments following representations from local residents attending the council meeting and others expressing objections in correspondence.

7.40pm Cllr CE Hall was invited back to the meeting. Six Parishioners left.

- 1.2 **17/01353/FUM** RSPB, Ouse Washes Floor Storage Reservoir Cambridgeshire – Creation of shallow and seasonal wetland features know as Scrapes.

Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council has concerns about this application and recommends outright refusal of permission for the following reasons:

Mosquitoes - The provision of shallow water will create a prevalence of Mosquitoes in the Ouse Washes, which would have a detrimental effect on local residents and animals in the surrounding area. There does not appear to be a report or results of any surveys to assess the impact of the scrapes and subsequent increase in Mosquitoes and insect activity.

8.00pm Cllrs BL and GH Taylor left the meeting.

- 1.3 **17/01440/FUL** Mr Mark Nicholas, Land opposite 11 Martins Lane, Lt Downham – Construction of 5 bed dwelling.

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

1. **Overdevelopment of the site** - the design, scale and height of the proposed three storey, 5 bedroom dwelling is considered too large for the site and location on Martins Lane and not in keeping with the street scene. It was suggested that a modest two storey 2 bedroom dwelling with sufficient parking would be more appropriate for the size of the site and location. The proposal would result in significant and demonstrable harm to the residential amenity of neighbours surrounding the site and a loss of privacy to Nos. 3 and 5 Cross Lane.
2. **Parking and access** - The proposed parking area is considered insufficient for the anticipated number of vehicles associated with the occupation of a 5 bedroom dwelling and would result in on-street parking, which is already an issue with overnight parking on Martins Lane. There is less parking area proposed than that of the adjacent new 5 bedroom dwelling. There is no parking provision for work vehicles, excavation vehicles and the delivery of materials within the cartilage of the site, which would result in the single carriageway of Martins Lane being blocked on regular occurrences during construction and, in particular, was a condition applied to the planning permission of the adjacent 5 bedroom dwelling. If permission was granted, all this would have a negative impact on local residents and their current way of life.

Additional comment

3. **The Parish Council considered its comments following representations from five local residents attending the council meeting and nine local residents writing to express their objections to the application.**

8.12pm Cllrs BL and GH Taylor were invited back to the meeting. Five parishioners left.

At the Chairman's discretion, the following item was brought forward.

- 1.5 **17/01553/FUL** Mr & Mrs Lee Scott, 7A Martins Lane Little Downham - Two storey rear extension.
Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.

8.15pm One parishioner and Cllrs JW Barker and KO Winters left the meeting.

- 1.4 **17/01550/FUL** Mr Tom Barker, 3 Third Drove, Lt Downham – Proposed two bed dwelling.
Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.

8.18pm Cllrs JW Barker and KO Winters were invited back to the meeting.

For information only:

- 1.6 ECDC - Applications approved: 17/00662/FUL, 17/00955/FUL, 17/00961/FUL, 17/01005/VAR, 17/01044/FUL, 17/01224/FUL, 17/01235/FUL
- 1.7 ECDC – Applications refused: 17/00969/OUT, 17/01203/FUL, 17/01240/FUL

80/17 FINANCE

1. **Monthly Internal Audit** was carried out by Cllr JW Barker and Cllr CE Hall.
2. **To receive approved Annual Return from External Auditor** – PKF Littlejohn LLP confirmed that it had completed the review of the Annual Return. There were with no matters arising in the External Auditors Report in Section 3 of the Return for the Council to consider and take action on. The Clerk informed that she had been asked for an explanation of the Council's funds being more than double the Precept. The External Auditor was fully satisfied with the explanation about the Pavilion Refurbishment and purchase of new burial land.
3. **Bank Account updates (Min.69/17.4)** – The Hampshire Trust Bank 1 Year Business Bond and the United Trust Bank 100-days Notice Account have been opened and funds of £80,000 have been deposited. The Nationwide Business Instant Saver Account was still being processed.
4. **To authorise update of Current Account signatories** – Forms to update the signatories of the Lloyds Bank Current Account were ready to be signed.
Resolved unanimously to remove LEA Joel from the Lloyds Bank Current Account and add Cllr GJ Hayter-Smith as a new signatory.
5. **To approve purchase of new oak seat at junction of Main Street and Townsend** - The oak bench in stock had been sold. A new seat will take 5-6 weeks and cost £375 + VAT. Carvings on the top rail will cost £2 per letter.
Resolved unanimously to order a new oak seat from MJ Elliott, Fakenham, and have **LITTLE DOWNHAM PARISH COUNCIL** carved on the top rail @ £427 + VAT.

6. **To approve bills and other items for payment** – It was proposed by Cllr JW Barker and seconded by Cllr CE Hall.
Resolved unanimously to approve BACS payments 625 - 638 and direct debits for the total sum of £6346.14.

81/17 **PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND ASSETS**

1. **The Holts Grazing - Request extension of grazing period (Min.151/161.2)** - The graziers requested an extension to the agreement by a month due to holiday and to arrange the next grazing site. They offered to pay an additional £20 for the privilege.
Resolved unanimously that the grazing agreement be extended to 29/10/2017 when all sheep must be removed from The Holts Meadows.
2. **Myles Meadow Grazing - Request extension of grazing period (Min.61/17)** - The graziers requested an extension to the agreement by a month because one of the cows was due to calve within the next week or so and they wanted to keep all the cattle close to home to keep an eye on them. It was noted that the Conservation Group was planning a 'fun walk/run/crawl' event in Myles Meadow on Sunday 29/10/2017 in aid of Children In Need.
Resolved unanimously that the grazing agreement be extended to 28/10/2017 by which date all cattle must be removed from Myles Meadows.
3. **Pavilion - update (Min.72/17.2)** - The final drawings and specifications were issued to members with their agenda. As explained in the accompanying Clerk's Memo dated 14/09/17, due to the building's infrequent use no heating system was specified so new fan heaters would be installed. Greg Saberton enclosed his invoice for the work and requested a cheque for £210 to accompany the Building Regulations Application that he will submit to ECDC. **A recorded vote to approve the final plans and specifications resulted as follows: In favour - (8) Cllrs JW Barker, CE Hall, GJ Hayter-Smith, MM Oldfield, MAC Seidler, BL Taylor, GH Taylor, JL Waters, Against – (1) Cllrs KO Winters.**
Resolved unanimously to approve the final plans and specifications, to invite tenders from six named local contractors and to issue a cheque for the Building Regulations Application.
The Clerk will enquire if Parish Councils can have reduced rates for Building Control services.

82/17 **PARISH MATTERS**

1. **East Cambs Parish Conference 07/07/17 Report** – Cllr KO Winters reported that due to a low number of interested attendees, the actual conference was cancelled and in the end only he and an Ely Councillor met with the Police and Crime Commissioner, Jason Ablewhite, for a mini meeting and a tour of Hinchingsbrooke Police Headquarters. Cllr Winters was very impressed by the facilities and professionalism of the Police. He reported that the Police are looking to recruit volunteers to assist with non-policing matters and the Commissioner's big project was to combine the Fire and Police Services to create further savings. Cllr Winters stated that the Commissioner was doing a splendid job with limited resources and he should be supported.
2. **East Cambs Parish Conference Littleport 10/10/17 from 12pm** – Cllrs MM Oldfield, BL Taylor GT Taylor and the Clerk expressed an interest to attend.
3. **Conservation Group plans and activities** – Keith Norton is arranging some low key guided walks around Pingle Wood and the Orchard, he had met with Ely Beavers on 19/09/17 in the conservation area, quotes for the proposed French Drain in Pingle Wood are on hold for the situation to be assessed during the winter, £300 left over from a grant would be used to purchase new picnic tables and the south east gate of Pingle Wood had been installed. Keith is helping a local girl from the Kings School and her friend in Ely with their Duke of Edinburgh Scheme Bronze Award. They have been assisting in the conservation area and will be helping to move Willow from his garden to replant as a living Willow Arch at the Children's Picnic Area.
4. **Little Downham Parish Council Welcome Book** - The Council produces the Welcome Book for new residents of the parish. It was noted that Debbie Adams-Payne no longer wanted to deliver them and had passed the books to Cllr Hayter-Smith, who would deliver with a new parish magazine. The Clerk updates the book periodically (last update July 2017) and prints a small number of copies at a time to avoid outdated copies being distributed.
Resolved unanimously for Cllr Hayter-Smith to hold a stock of books in the parish, to distribute to new residents and to update the Clerk on who they have been delivered to in order to avoid duplicated deliveries or missing a property.
Church distributors will be informed of the new arrangements, if they wish to deliver any.

83/17 HIGHWAYS

1. Replies re matters reported from previous meetings:

- 1.1 Dunkirk, Lt Downham** – work to build up the dips and tarmac the road will commence 28/09/17.
- 1.2 Black Bank Road, Lt Downham** – work to build up the dips and tarmac the road will commence late October. CCC will deliver letters to directly affected local residents.

2. To report current matters of concern:

- 2.1 Downham Common near Second Drove, Lt Downham** – problem areas have been marked but it was suggested signs be put up to make drivers aware of them.
- 2.2 B1411 Downham Road, Ely** – Grips are required from Orwell Pit Farm to Ely Tool Hire to reduce surface water and pooling during and after rainfall. Brambles need cutting back between Ely Tool Hire and the Ely Leisure Village.
- 2.3 A10 between Downham Road and Witchford Road Roundabouts** - Grips are required to reduce surface water and pooling during and after rainfall.

84/17 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

9.16pm 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 85/17 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.

85/17 PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND ASSETS

- 1. New Cemetery Land – update (Min.72/17.1)** – CAPALC has suggested contacting Philip Peacock, Clerk to Huntingdon Town Council, for advice and information regarding new burial land, contractors and tips. The clerk was instructed to obtain a letter from the landowner confirming that they are willing to sell the land to the Parish Council for use as a new cemetery.

86/17 REQUEST OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION – None.

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

Signed (Chairman) Date