

**MINUTES of a meeting of Little Downham Parish Council held in the Village Hall,
Main Street, Little Downham, on Thursday, 19 October 2017 commencing at 7.00 pm.**

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

Other attendees: Dist. Cllr A Bailey and four parishioners.

91/17 **TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** - Cllrs RS Martin and GH Taylor, Dist. Cllr M Bradley and County Cllr L Dupre.

92/17 **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

1. **Cllr CE Hall** declared a prejudicial interest in item 97/17.1.1 (Application 17/00733/FUM) because family members have an interest in the application. (Declaration 026-2017).

2. **Cllr BL Taylor** declared the following interests (Declaration 027-2017):
2.1 Prejudicial interest in item 97/17.1.2 (Application 17/01628/OUT) because he is the applicant;
2.2 Personal interests in items 97/17.1.3 and 1.4 (Applications 17/01631/OUT & 17/01632/OUT respectively) because the applicant is a friend.

Late declaration was made prior to item 103/17.1 –
3. **Cllr G Hayter-Smith** declared a prejudicial interest in item 103/17.1 (Book Café Manager Appraisal) because Avril Hayter-Smith is his wife (Declaration 028-2017).

93/17 **PUBLIC FORUM** – No comments

94/17 **COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

1. Dist Cllr Bailey reported on the ECDC Corporate Plan 2017-19 that has updated the 2015-19 plan. Notable elements of the new plan include: 0% Council Tax (East Cambs element) rise for 2018/19 and 2019/20 (a total of six years in a row); Develop and deliver a programme of investment to generate income from East Cambs Trading Company to protect, invest in and enhance 'front line' services and balance the budget; 'Work to live, not live to work' - focus efforts throughout the Council and partner agencies to improve opportunities for people to work near to home; Maximise the benefits of devolution for all residents, businesses and visitors within East Cambs; Develop and deliver a District wide tourism strategy to maximise the benefits of tourism to the local economy; Develop a district Community Land Trust to support local communities to deliver CLT schemes across the District; Work with local partners and the Combined Authority to develop an integrated, improved and sustainable road transport, including work on A142, A14, A10; Champion the provision of GP, health, social care and school places to support growth; Seek to deliver a crematorium within the District and investigate the options for a woodland burial area. ECDC has also accepted the new Local Plan at Full Council and a limited public consultation is being held from 08/11/17 for six weeks. No additional sites are allocated for Lt Downham and Pymoor. ECDC now has a 5-year land supply and housing plan, which means that development envelopes are back in place and applications for sites outside the envelopes will be refused (unless they comply with one or more limited number of reasons for exception).

2. In her absence, County Cllr Dupre provided a report that covered the County Council Budget, Innovate & Cultivate Fund, Children's Centres, Air Quality, Local Government Reorganisation, Opportunity Area, Local Enterprise Partnership, Getting into Teaching, Cambridgeshire archive moved delayed, Cycleway Witchford to Witcham Toll and her surgery dates and venues: 30/10/17, 6:30-7:30pm in Witchford, St Andrew's Hall; 01/11/17, 2:00-3:00pm in Little Downham, Book Café; 14/11/17, 6:30-7:30pm, Sutton, school community room; 27/11/17, 6:30-7:30pm in Witchford, St Andrew's Hall.

3. In his absence, Dist Cllr Bradley provided a brief update on the Ouse washes and SLBB issue by informing that the Environment Agency is to report at the next Littleport Internal Drainage board meeting. He will update the Council when he has more information.

95/17 **TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

1. **Resolved** that the minutes of 21 September 2017 were correct and to be signed by the Chairman as a true record. Cllr Winters complained that the Clerk had been selective in the minutes by not printing a full copy of his report read at item 82/17.1. The majority of the Council were satisfied that the Clerk had picked up on the main points of his report. Cllr Winters agreed

to a full copy of the report being sent to the littledownham.net editor for uploading on the website.

2. **Resolved** that the minutes of 12 October 2017 were correct and to be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

9617 **MATTERS TO REPORT**

1. **(Min.80/17.3) Bank Account updates** – Confirmation was received that the Nationwide Account was open and ready for funds to be transferred in via the Lloyds current account.
2. **(Min.80/17.4) update Lloyds current account signatories** - Lloyds confirmed that signatories had been updated.
3. **(Min.81/17.3) Pavilion update** – ECDC Building Control had agreed to reduce its application and inspections fees from £210 to £150 + VAT and £420 to £160 + VAT respectively.
4. **Draft East Cambs Local Plan – Third Stage Public Consultation 08/11/17 – 19/12/17** – The Clerk informed of the forthcoming consultation and issued members with copies of the proposed policies for Little Downham and Pymoor villages. Members were encouraged to view the draft local plan on ECDC website prior to the next meeting or visit ECDC to view the document.
5. **Conservation Group Meeting Report 27/09/17 (Cllr JW Barker)** - £54 was raised at a yard sales from the sale of Pingle Wood honey; the group had been given a donation of £500 for their social fund for all the work they do in the conservation area; the bench next to the bee hive needs repairing; volunteers are needed to trim around the orchard trees; the two girls doing their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award have listed all conservation group tools; the issue to solve excess water at the south end of Pingle Wood is on hold at present but suggestions have included a raised walkway, chippings or simply roping off the area; Gordon Frankland is to take the lead on pruning apple trees on 02/12/17 at 10am, members of the public are welcome to attend; an apple press was discussed again, but decided against; lastly, the Conservation Group will have a stall at the Lt Downham Fete on 02/06/18.
6. **Lt Downham Recreation Area** – It was reported that ECDC was contacting all parish council to advise that all entrances to recreation areas and private land should be locked to avoid unauthorised encampment by travellers moving through the District. Travellers had been moved from Burwell by bailiffs and traveller 'scout' vans had been seen in the parish. The gate will be unlocked when informed that the travellers have moved out of the area.

97/17 **PLANNING MATTERS**

1. Planning correspondence -
7.20pm 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 plans received by ECDC - details not known at time of agenda print] **Resolved** - Little Downham Parish Council had concerns regarding this application and unanimously recommended amendments to the scheme for the following reasons:
 1. **Parking concerns** - The Parish Council notes the allocated 11 visitor parking spaces and two parking spaces per dwellings (54) plus 10 additional spaces, making a total of 75 parking places on site. It is aware that 19 parking spaces are in garages, which it considers over time the occupiers will obtain planning permission to convert into living accommodation, thus reducing the allocated parking on site to basically two per dwelling. With the dwellings ranging from 2 to 4 bedrooms, it is inevitable that there will be more vehicles per dwelling than the number of bedrooms. It is requested that at least 13 additional spaces are provided to avoid too many vehicles being parked on footways, which restrict pedestrian access, hinder access by emergency, delivery and refuse vehicles and result in a cramped appearance of the site.
 2. **Width of roads** – Strong concerns were raised again that the proposed 5m width of the road and private service drives are not wide enough for the anticipated number of vehicles for 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 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.]

3. Refuse Collection Point adjacent to Disabled Parking Bay (73D) – It is recommended that the bin collection point adjacent to 73(D) is relocated adjacent to Parking Bay 75. The reasons are that wheelie bins and refuse bags would hinder the users of the disabled parking bay and the occupiers of 27Wh, whereas the new location would be adjacent to the rear garden of 19T and would have less of a detrimental impact on the occupiers.

Additional comments:

The Council appreciates the applicant's cooperation in amending the application.

7.40pm Cllr CE Hall was invited back to the meeting. Cllrs BL Taylor and KO Winters left the meeting.

7.42pm One parishioner left the meeting.

7.44pm Cllr KO Winters returned to the meeting.

- 1.2 **17/01628/OUT** Mr BL Taylor, Site adjacent to Fieldview, Cowbridge Hall Road, Lt Downham – 3 detached chalet style bungalows. Concerns were expressed that the development is outside the development envelope of Lt Downham and there is no footway on Cowbridge Hall Road, which is an unrestricted road. **A vote result of no concerns was: In Favour: 5, Against: 3.**
Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.

7.50pm Cllr BL Taylor was invited back to the meeting. Two parishioners left the meeting.

- 1.3 **17/01631/OUT** Mr Parson, Land south west of No. 4 Second Drove, Lt Downham – Proposed 2 detached chalet style 2 storey dwellings -
Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.

7.56pm District Cllr A Bailey left the meeting.

- 1.4 **17/01632/OUT** Mr Parson, Land south west of No. 23 Second Drove, Lt Downham – Proposed 2 detached chalet style 2 storey dwellings -
Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.

- 1.5 **17/01747/AGN** CN Seeds, Green Acres, Straight Furlong, Pymoor – Steel portal framed building
Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.

- 1.6 **17/01751/FUL** Mrs Sally Murfitt, 10 Bury Green, Lt Downham – Single storey rear extension -
Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.

- 1.7 **17/01783/TRE** Lt Downham Parish Council, 9A Townsend, Lt Downham – Willow Trees T1 and T2 – Re-pollard both - **Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.**

- 1.8 **17/01794/FUL** Ms Olive Butcher, Poplar Farm, 2 Fourth Drove, Lt Downham – Replacement dwelling. Concern was expressed that the proposed development was in a flood risk area, but that was not reflected in the Flood Risk Assessment included with the plans. **A recorded vote to express the concerns resulted as follows: In favour - (5) Cllrs JW Barker, G Ord, BL Taylor, JL Waters, KO Winters Against – (4) Cllrs CE Hall, GJ Hayter-Smith, MM Oldfield, MAC Seidler.**
Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had concerns regarding this application and recommended amendments to the scheme because the development is considered to be in a flood risk area and that is not reflected in the Flood Risk Assessment letter that accompanied the application.

- 1.9 **17/01798/FUL** Mr & Mrs D Chapman, 5 Bishops Close, Lt Downham – Two storey extension plus front and rear single storey extension (see 16/01778/FUL)
Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.

For information only:

1.10 ECDC - Applications approved: 17/00557/ARN, 17/00970/OUT

1.11 ECDC – Applications refused: 17/01296/FUL, 17/01360/FUL

98/17 FINANCE

1. **Monthly Internal Audit** was carried out by Cllrs G Ord and BL Taylor.

2. **Citizens Advice Rural Cambs – Grant request** - Dr Batul Dungarwalla (Citizens Advice Rural Cambs CEO) wrote to request a grant of £1000 to support training of volunteers at Citizens Advice Rural Cambs. She informed that in Downham Villages, 86 new clients were helped with 396 problems. It was agreed that there is a need for the service, but to request double the grant of last year was considered too much. The Council had £500 allocated in the budget.
Resolved unanimously to approve a grant of £500 to Citizens Advice Rural Cambs for 2017/18 (Local Government Act 1972 s. 142).
3. **Friends of Downham Feoffees School – Grant request** - It was agreed to pledge funds towards the transport of a whole school trip to the Hunstanton Theatre, which is extra-curricular.
Resolved unanimously to pledge £550 to the Friends of Downham Feoffees School for the whole school trip to the Hunstanton Theatre in December 2017 (Section 137, Local Government Act 1972).
4. **To review annual insurance renewal 2017-18** – The Council reviewed its list of assets and replacement values. It was noted that this was year 2 of the 3-year term agreement with Zurich.
Resolved unanimously to approve the Zurich policy premium of £1441.91 including IPT for annual insurance to cover for the period 27/10/2017 - 26/10/2018.
5. **To approve bills and other items for payment** – It was proposed by Cllr G Ord and seconded by Cllr BL Taylor.
Resolved unanimously to approve cheque nos. 001086 – 001087 and BACS payments 639 - 650 for the total sum of £9082.38.

99/17 PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND ASSETS

1. **Vehicles parked on village greens** – It was reported that a white van regularly parks on the edge of Church Green and the driver frequently drives across the green to go down Ely Road. It was noted that the edge of the grass is getting damaged and vehicles tracks can be seen across the grass. The Council accepts infrequent parking on the green for funerals and the parish 10k races held twice yearly, but will not tolerate abuse of the green. A letter will be sent to the driver.

100/17 PARISH MATTERS

1. **East Cambs Parish Conference Littleport 10/10/17 from 12pm (Cllrs M Oldfield, B & G Taylor)** – Cllr Oldfield reported that the meeting was held in the New Littleport Leisure Centre and began with presentations on four parish projects (Stretham & Wilburton's Community Land Trust, Sutton's Glebe Community Centre car park and driveway refurbishment, Soham's Walter Gidney Pavilion redevelopment and Isleham's The Beeches Community Centre & skate park). Although most projects had been completed, it was evident that they took from three to nine years to get to where they were now. Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Mayor, James Palmer, gave a short talk on Devolution and stated that he had direct communications with government ministers and that they listen. The main topic and questions from the floor concerned infrastructure and the poor road and rail links in our area. Mayor Palmer spoke of ideas for an underground transport system for Cambridge and out to St Neots. Other transport links would be improved, but there were no definite plans. The final item of the meeting was a rushed presentation on the Community Infrastructure Levy.
2. **Pymoor Telephone Box** – This item was deferred to the next meeting for further information.

101/17 HIGHWAYS

1. **Replies re matters reported from previous meetings**
 - 1.1 **Brambles on B1411 near the Leisure Village (Min.83/17.2.2)** - CCC does not think the hedge needs cutting back. The Clerk was instructed to report again and emphasize the danger of overhanging Brambles hitting someone in the face.
 - 1.2 **B1411 Downham Road Ely, Ely Road and Church Way, Little Downham** - work is to begin around early November to redress the surface. This work is continuous, so it is not clear how long the diversion via Pymoor, Black Bank Road and the A10 vice versa will be in place. Local residents will be informed. The work is similar to that of Main Street a couple of years ago.
 - 1.3 **Black Bank Road, Lt Downham (Min.83/17.1.2)** – A road closure will be in place while CCC resurface the road. Dunkirk had been resurfaced and was considered a good job.
2. **To report current matters of concern:**
 - 2.1 **Black Bank Road, Lt Downham** – Large dip approximately 12' x 20' outside No. 2 needs filling.
 - 2.2 **New poo bin at upper Townsend, Lt Downham** – It was requested that the handyman turns the bins round to face the road, so dog walkers do not have to stand on the grass.

- 2.3 **97 Main Street, Lt Downham** – Hedge needs trimming, as it overhangs the footway.
- 2.4 **Fourth Drove, Lt Downham** – Uneven road. A local resident catches the bottom of his car on the drove. The Clerk requested more information of location in order to pinpoint the position on the online fault form on Cambridgeshire County Council website.
- 2.5 **Lawn Lane, Lt Downham** – The interactive speed sign is still flashing despite it being reported a couple of months ago.

102/17 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

9.10pm **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 103/17 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.**

103/17 HUMAN RESOURCES

9.15pm **Cllr G Hayter-Smith** declared a prejudicial interest in item 103/17.1 (Book Café Manager Appraisal) because Avril Hayter-Smith is his wife (Declaration 028-2017). He left the meeting.

- 1. **To consider Book Café Manager’s staff appraisal (Cllr JL Waters)** – Mrs Hayter-Smith’s appraisal was held on 09/10/17. The Appraisal Officer, Cllr JL Waters, read her report to the Council. There were no changes recommended to Mrs Hayter-Smith’s conditions of employment, hours of work, job description, annual leave entitlement, salary and pension provision. Her salary hourly rate is linked to government increases. Cllr Waters concluded that Mrs Hayter-Smith continues to manage the Book Café and volunteers well and has ideas to increase its footfall.

Resolved unanimously to approve Mrs Hayter-Smith’s Staff Appraisal.

9.17pm Cllr G Hayter-Smith was invited back to the meeting.

- 2. **To consider Handyman’s annual staff appraisal (Cllr JL Waters)** - Mr Mitchell’s appraisal was held on 09/10/17. The Appraisal Officer, Cllr JL Waters, read her report to the Council. There was no change recommended to Mr Mitchell’s conditions of employment, hours of work, job description, leave entitlement and pension provision. No training was requested or required at present. Cllr Waters suggested that the Council looked at buying a mower for Mr Mitchell to cut and collect the grass in Lt Downham play areas because parents complain about the grass cuttings after each cut. The cost for Truelink to cut and collect would be double the current rate. Mr Mitchell requested the Council to purchase 30m drain rods, so he doesn’t have to use his own. Cllr Waters concluded that Mr Mitchell did not have a salary increase last year, but the Council could consider an increase with effect from April 2018 based on the increase rate of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) agreed a pay scale that is expected in the spring. The Clerk was asked to obtain mower quotes for the next meeting.

Resolved unanimously to accept Mr Mitchell’s Staff Appraisal, to consider the purchase of a mower, to approve the purchase of 30m drain rods @ £149.01 and to consider a salary increase in April 2018 based on the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) agreed pay scale increase rate.

9.25pm The Clerk left the meeting.

- 3. **To consider Clerk’s annual staff appraisal (Cllr JL Waters)** - Mrs Wardle’s appraisal was held on 09/10/17. The Appraisal Officer, Cllr JL Waters, read her report to the Council. There was no change recommended to Mrs Wardle’s conditions of employment, hours of work, job description, leave entitlement and pension provision. Her salary will increase in accordance with the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) agreed pay scales. Mrs Wardle had attended various training sessions during the year through the SLCC and CAPALC. She requires a new external hard drive to archive the Council’s files. She has responsibilities as line manager to the Handyman and Book Café Manager. Her workload is increasing as the Pavilion Refurbishment and New Cemetery projects are gaining momentum.

Resolved unanimously to approve the Clerk’s Staff Appraisal and approve the purchase of a new external hard drive.

9.26pm The Clerk was invited back to the meeting.

104/17 REQUEST OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION - None

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.29 pm.

Signed (Chairman) Date