

**MINUTES of a General Meeting of Little Downham Parish Council held in the Village Hall,
Main Street, Little Downham, on Thursday, 19th July 2018 commencing at 7.00pm.**

Councillors present: JL Waters, in the chair, and JW Barker, GJ Hayter-Smith, MM Oldfield, G Ord, DR Parson, GH Taylor, and KO Winters. **Clerk:** Mrs J Wardle

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

42/18 TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Cllrs CE Hall, RA Maxey and MAC Seidler.

43/18 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. **Cllr GH Taylor** declared prejudicial interests in item 48/18.1.2 (Application 18/00694/ARN) 48/18.1.7 (Application 18/00891/OUT) because she an Aunt and Cousin to the applicants respectively (Declaration 006-2018).

44/18 PUBLIC FORUM

Mr Cusick spoke in objection to item 48/18.1.3 and requested the Parish Council to support local residents by rejecting the application.

45/18 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

1. County Cllr Dupre's monthly report was distributed to members prior to the meeting. There were no issues raised from the report. Cllr Winters informed Cllr Dupre of potential flood risks from the New Bedford River (Hundred Foot Drain) because the water is high to the bank. He stated that when the tide is high and the water is high to the bank, Littleport & Downham Internal Drainage Board has to close pumps; in such cases the Parish Council should be informed.
2. Dist. Cllr Bailey's monthly report was distributed to members via email prior to the meeting and hard copies were given to those that didn't have email addresses. Cllr Bailey explained ECDC's 5-year housing plan following a national planning inspector's recent comments that resulted in an appeal for 100 houses outside the development envelope in Fordham being upheld. The planning inspector concluded that ECDC could no longer "demonstrate a five-year land supply", as, basically, there had not been enough houses built in the district since 2011 to reach targets. Cllr Bailey informed that ECDC was on target with the number of new dwellings approved, but it could not make developers build. This matter would be addressed with the new Local Plan.

7.18pm County Cllr Dupre and Dist. Cllr Bailey were thanked for attending. Cllr Dupre left the meeting.

46/18 TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

1. **Resolved** that the minutes of 21st June 2018 were correct and to be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

47/18 MATTERS TO REPORT

1. **(Min.36/18.5) To consider build-up of land at Myles Meadow trough and Holts Meadow gate** – Work was recently completed by Mr Freeman using soil from Myles Meadow. Thanks to John Barker, John Bennett and Richard Maxey for their assistants with this matter.
2. **(Min.40/18.2) Lt Downham Recreation Area gate** – Sgt Mark Rabel had emailed the Clerk to inform that a small group of travellers were still in the local area and recommended that Parish Council's keep recreation area gates secured at present.
3. **(Min.40/18.2) Pymoor Recreation Area gate** – Gates are on order from SM Engineering, Pymoor.
4. **CCC Agency Services verges grass cutting contribution** – Funding from CCC of £1879.82 was received 11/07/18.

48/18 PLANNING MATTERS

1. **Planning correspondence -**
- 1.1 **18/00535/FUL** Mr Wilson and Grimsey, land adjacent 82 Ely Road, Lt Downham – New single storey dwelling and associated garage – AMENDMENT – involves a reduction in scale and amendment to boundary treatments. It was noted that ECDC had approved this application.

7.23pm One parishioner arrived.
7.24pm Cllr GH Taylor left the meeting prior to the next item being discussed.

- 1.2 **18/00694/ARN** Mr Richard Taylor, Highcroft Farm, Main Drove, Lt Downham – 3 dwellings.
Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no comments regarding this application.

7.30pm Cllr GH Taylor was invited back to the meeting.

- 1.3 **18/00775/FUL** Mr Jason Constable, 51 Cannon Street, Lt Downham – Proposed demolition of existing and erection of 2no. 4 bedroom dwellings fronting Cannon Street, 3no. 2 bedroom dwellings, and 1no. 3 bedroom dwelling fronting White Horse Lane.
Little Downham Parish Council had concerns regarding this application and unanimously recommended outright refusal for the following reasons:

1. **Development of the site** – With the exception of the two dwellings proposed on Cannon Street, the proposal, which is predominantly backland development and outside the development envelope, would result in a loss of privacy to neighbouring dwellings, in particular, nos. 49, 49A and 55 Cannon Street and nos. 5 and 7 White Horse Lane. The proposal would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions of residents adjacent and opposite the development site on Cannon Street and White Horse Lane. These impacts would result in a conflict with policies LP1 and LP2 of the East Cambs Local Plan 2015 and paragraphs 17 and 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework. In addition, planning permission approved in 2017 for 27 dwellings at the east end of Cannon Street negates the need for five additional new dwelling in this rural location.

2. **Parking issues** – Concern was expressed that insufficient parking spaces had been allocated per dwelling to cater for future residents and visitors. Inevitably, this would result in cars being parked on the access road and on-street parking on Cannon Street, which is a busy thoroughfare used by large farm and haulage vehicles and already subject to regular parking issues. At least, the number of parking space per the number of bedrooms of each dwelling would be more appropriate.

3. **Site Access** - The access road is considered too narrow for the anticipated number of vehicles associated with five new 2-bed and 4-bed dwellings. It is on a slope and has visibility issues to the east due to the adjacent garage of No. 49A. These issues could cause problems for drivers exiting the site, as well as access to and from the site for construction, delivery and emergency vehicles. The anticipated movement of vehicles at night would be detrimental to local residents living opposite the proposed access, as headlights would be shining through their windows. There is no allocated footway for pedestrian access.

4. **Proposed dwelling on White Horse Lane** – The proposed dwelling would significantly harm the outlook from No. 5 and the living conditions of the occupant due to its size and proximity. The Lane is a single track and considerably narrow. Vehicle movement is very restricted and additional vehicles on this Lane would have a detrimental effect on existing occupants of the Lane. Wheelie bins and bins bags are left on Cannon Street, as the weekly refuse vehicles are unable to venture down the Lane.

5. **Loss of natural habitat** – Loss of the Orchard (approximately 1.5 ha) would have had a devastating impact on the local wildlife of the area, which is sited a few hundred yards north and west of the Little Downham Local Nature Reserve, which has protected species, such as the Great Crested Newts and Bats. Does to application conform to Policy ENV7 of the Local Plan (2015) in respect of the protection of biodiversity and guidance contained within The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) in respect of undertaking of Appropriate Assessments of Habitats Directive Species?

6. **Surface Water Flooding** – Concerns were expressed by parishioners regarding existing flooding issues from excess surface water drainage in White Horse Lane. Although appropriate action by installing additional drainage has been taken to alleviate current concerns, albeit it still causes flooding to an adjacent field, development of this site would exacerbate the situation in the future.

7. **Outside the development envelope** – Although this is not a reason for refusal on its own, it is observed that four of the proposed dwellings are outside of the development envelope and plots 3 – 5 are considered as backland development. Approval of this application could set a precedent for further backland applications into the open countryside.

Additional comment

8. The Parish Council considered its comments following direct representations from seven local residents expressing objections in correspondence.

7.53pm Dist. Cllr Bailey and three parishioners left the meeting.

- 1.4 **18/00804/FUL** Mr Ian Rutherford, California Farm, California, Lt Downham – Demolish rear extensions and replace. Proposed works to the rear of the existing side extension and replacement roof.
Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.
- 1.5 **18/00823/FUL** Mr Andrew Jenkins, 2B Main Street, Pymoor – Retrospective – Balcony on top of existing flat roof.
Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.
- 1.6 **18/00829/FUL** Mr and Mrs Chris Kelly, 19 Bishops Close, Lt Downham – Two storey rear extension.
Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.
- 1.7 **18/00891/OUT** Mr R Golding, Land south west of Broadlands, Straight Furlong, Pymoor – Erection of new dwelling with garage and associated works.
Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.

For information only:

- 1.8 ECDC - Applications approved: 17/00731/ARN, 18/00625/FUL

8.10pm One parishioner left the meeting.

49/18 FINANCE

1. **Monthly Internal Audit** was Cllrs JW Barker and G Ord.
2. **To consider appointment of Internal Auditor 2018/19 (Min.34/18.2)** – Acceptable references were received from Witchford Parish Council and Wisbech Town Council. Coveney Parish Council did not respond to the reference request.
Resolved unanimously to appoint CanalBS Ltd as Internal Auditor for 2018/19.
3. **Lt Downham Speed Watch – request financial assistance for Speed Watch equipment (Min.16/18.2 & 21/1/.2)** – The Council was disappointed to be informed by the Speed Watch Group that the equipment held by Dist. Cllr Bradley and ECDC was not as readily available as he had expressed at the Council meeting on 24/05/18. The Clerk was instructed to email Dist. Cllr Bradley and ECDC to establish the status of the kits. The Speed Watch Group reported that four sessions had been held to date on various dates and times on Cowbridge Hall Road, Ely Road, Cannon Street and in Pymoor. Today's session saw 114 cars pass; seven were over the speed limit, but not the limit for letters to be sent. The Clerk had obtained three quotes for Vehicle Activated Signs, but they each varied in specifications and costs.
The Council decided to defer the decision of purchase to the next meeting.

At the Chairman's discretion, the next item was brought forward following a request from Cllr Winters, who was recovering from a knee operation and wanted to go home.

51/18 PARISH MATTERS

1. **Littleport & Downham Internal Drainage Board Flood Risk Management Strategy Study** – Cllr Winters stated that as a Drainage board member along with Cllr Parson, they were not aware of the study being requested by Littleport & Downham IDB, as stated in the covering letter from Peter Brett Associates LLP (PBA) informing of the Study. The Clerk was instructed to reply to PBA to ask who had requested the study, to inform that the Parish Council is interested in this Study, express concerns regarding potential flood risks from the New Bedford River (Hundred Foot Drain), recommend that the river is dredged regularly and widened by two thirds to alleviate some of the potential flood risks and that the IDB pump at Oxlode needs submersible pumps installed that will work in a flood.

8.38pm Cllr Winters left the meeting.

49/18 FINANCE

4. **Magpas – Donation request** - It was proposed by Cllr JL Waters and seconded by Cllr DR Parson to grant a donation of £262 to fill a helicopter fuel tank and £55 to run one rapid response vehicle for a day.
Resolved unanimously to approve a donation of £317 to Magpas under S137, Local Government Act 1972.

5. **Youths Act UP – Grant request** – Mrs Hebbard (Lt Downham Youth Group Chairman) requested a grant of £800 to cover annual insurance (£300) and village hall fees (£500) for the drama group held on Saturday mornings during term time. She provided a report of the group's activities and performances during the past two years, a copy of the Youth Group's accounts for the year ending 31/03/2017 and a brief explanation of its current expenditure and bank balances. The Council felt it did not have sufficient information to consider a grant on this occasion as there were no accounts enclosed for the financial year ending 31/03/2018. The Council requested a copy of the accounts for the past financial year and deferred its decision to another meeting.
6. **To consider Hampshire Trust Business Bond maturing 23/08/18** – It was anticipated that the Council would not need to draw on the funds for the next 12 months and it should be re-invested. **Resolved unanimously to reinvest the maturing balance of £80,000 plus gross interest of £1233.21 in new 1-year Business Bond with the same signatories (Cllrs JL Waters, CE Hall and GJ Hayter-Smith) and mandate of any two to sign.**
7. **To approve bills and other items for payment** – It was proposed by Cllr JW Barker and seconded by Cllr G Ord.
Resolved unanimously to approve BACS payments 738 – 747 and direct debits for the total sum of £5882.04 as listed below:

Online payments:

Wilko (cc)	LD Rec Maintenance / repairs	7.00
Aldi (cc)	Pavilion Cleaning materials	5.98
Mapsupplies.co.uk (cc)	LD Rec Maintenance / repairs	54.56
Digital Isle Ltd (cc)	LD Rec Maintenance / repairs	6.80
Little Downham Village Hall	B/Café Meetings & sessions	224.00
Little Downham Village Hall	Conservation Group meetings	16.00
Little Downham Village Hall	Council meetings	24.00
Truelink Ltd	Grass cutting - verges	270.00
Truelink Ltd	Grass cutting - Parish	665.88
Truelink Ltd	Grass cutting - Pymoor	48.96
TCV (The Conservation Volunteers)	Annual subscription	38.00
HM Revenue & Customs	PAYE & NI contributions	763.54
JM Wardle reimbursement	Bus shelter cleaning	25.00
July staff salary payments and expenses		2421.40
July pension payments		1,243.92

Direct Debits

Wildlife Trust	Wildlife Trust subscription	36.00
EDF Energy	LD Rec Utilities	31.00

50/18 PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND ASSETS

1. **To review Parish grass cutting** (Min. 36/18.3) – It was noted that the grass cutting was much better, although it was not growing much in the recent months of severe hot weather.
2. **Basic Payment Scheme – Community Orchard (Min.36/18.4)** – Formal response was still waited from RPA. The Clerk was instructed to consult the conservation group about grazing sheep in the orchard and/or cutting the grass for Hay in order for the land to be eligible for BPS. The conservation group's next meeting was on 25th July.
3. **Voluntary Land Registration of Parish Council land (Min.162/16.1)** – The Clerk reported that this matter was still ongoing with HEY Solicitors Ltd and James Southward had taken over the work from Mr Irons. Following a review visit at the Downham Market office where James was based, the Clerk issued all members with an update of the current status.

52/18 HIGHWAYS

1. **Replies re matters reported from previous meetings:**
 - 1.1 **(Min.38/18) Black Bank Road verge widening** – The Road Safety Team advised that Black Bank Road is not a cluster site and they would not look to do any type of verge building work along it. It would be a massive task and way above the local highway officer's budget. The LH officer would put up some soft verge warning signs.

1.2 CCC Proposed Road Recycling – CCC informed that works on Adventurers Drove were due to start 23/07/18. Work due on Hundred Foot Bank had been re-evaluated and postponed following the deterioration of the road during the past weeks of dry weather. The original designs are no longer appropriate because of this and it would affect the longevity of the work. CCC would update the Council when it had further information.

2. To report current matters of concern:

2.1 The Hythe (Top Road to Coveney), Lt Downham – Report to the police drug paraphernalia found on the beet pad and several cars seen there at various times.

Also report to CCC that briars are encroaching the carriageway.

2.2 Dog bin on green at upper Townsend, Lt Downham – Cllr Ord reported that a parishioner would like permission to paint the dog bin green, which they felt would be more in keeping with the natural environment. The Council approved the request.

53/18 REQUEST OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

1. Pymoor Recreation Field – The Council would like to see the weeds cut back around the field, the roller and old cricket frames removed and would obtain quotes to repair the north boundary fence. The Clerk would contact Pymoor Cricket and Social Club about the weeds, roller and cricket frames.

2. Pavilion update

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.47 pm.

Signed (Chairman) Date

