

**MINUTES of a General Meeting of Little Downham Parish Council held in the Village Hall, Main Street, Little Downham, on Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018 commencing at 7.00pm.**

**Councillors present:** JL Waters, in the chair, and JW Barker, CE Hall, GJ Hayter-Smith, RA Maxey, MM Oldfield, G Ord, DR Parson (7.04pm), MAC Seidler and KO Winters **Clerk:** Mrs J Wardle

**Other attendees:** Three parishioners.

**97/18 TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – Cllr GH Taylor, Dist. Cllr A Bailey and County Cllr L Dupre.

7.04pm Cllr DR Parson arrived.

**98/18 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

1. **Cllr MM Oldfield** declared a personal interest in item 106/18.3 because she is a member of the Fete Committee (Declaration 009-2018).
2. **Cllr JL Waters** declared a prejudicial interest in item 106/18.4 because she is an organiser of the New Year's Eve Party (Declaration 010-2018).

**99/18 PUBLIC FORUM**

1. Mr Cusick expressed objections to item 103/18.1.2 stating that the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Reptile Survey made reference to the previous application of seven dwellings, were taken at the wrong time of year in October when Great Crested Newts (GCNs) begin to hibernate and that GCNs are not Reptiles. A GCNs Survey should be carried out in the Spring.
2. Cllr Waters explained the reason for item 106/18.4. The Village Hall's New Year's Eve Celebration this year was not including children. As there were many families that could not attend, she would like to hold a family New Year's Eve Party in a marquee on the recreation field for parents who do not have babysitters. She requested use of the Pavilion for kitchen and toilet facilities. A floodlight would light up the play area and parents would bring their own drinks.

**100/18 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

1. Monthly reports from Dist. Cllr Bailey and County Cllr Dupre were distributed to members via email or as a hard copy for those who didn't have an email address.

**101/18 TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

1. **Resolved** that the minutes of 18 October 2018 were correct and be signed by the Chairman.

**102/18 MATTERS TO REPORT**

1. **(Min.87/18.2) Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust Granite Plaque in commemoration of Lt Downham Airfield (April 1916 - March 1919) – WWI plaque** – The plaque was officially unveiled on 11 November after the Church Remembrance service, where the Chairman laid a wreath at the war memorial on behalf of the community. During the unveiling, the Chairman expressed thanks to the Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust for their gift to the Parish and to everyone who had been involved with the installation of the plaque. Reverend Matt Phillips followed by dedicating the plaque to the parish in remembrance of the courage and dedication of all who volunteered to protect the residents our community and country through The Great War. A press release and photographs were sent to the Ely Standard, Cambridge News and Clerk and Council magazine. A letter of thanks was sent to Craig Delanoy for his generosity in supplying and constructing the metal frame for the plaque. Information about the Plaque and its coordinates would be sent to ABCT to be recorded on its website.
2. **(Min.19/18.3) Liam Badcock - Isle FC** – The Club has decided to play its future home games on the 3g pitch at Witchford Village College. They paid for use of Lt Downham recreation field for their match in September and had not played any games in October or November.

**103/18 PLANNING MATTERS**

7.25pm Two parishioners arrived.

1. **Planning correspondence -**

- 1.1 **18/00242/ARN** Mr Simon Stevenson, Pymoor Lane Farm, Pymoor Lane, Pymoor – Convert existing agricultural building into a one-bedroom dwelling – AMENDMENT – Additional information received includes Environmental Investigation Report.

**Resolved - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.**

- 1.2 **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 – AMENDMENT – submission of additional ecological surveys.

**Resolved** - Little Downham Parish Council had concerns regarding the amended application dated 19/10/2018 and unanimously recommended outright refusal for the following reasons:

1. The amendment does not address the concerns that the Parish Council had express previously regarding this proposed development.
2. No amendments should be considered or approved until ECDC Planning Committee receives an Amphibian (Great Crested Newt) Survey, as requested at the 24/09/18 meeting, which cannot take place until Spring 2019 when Great Crested Newts come out of hibernation in March/April. The developer should not be permitted to submit piecemeal applications in the meantime.
3. The Council believes this amendment was an attempt to circumvent the planning committee's request and planning process.
4. The Reptile survey -
  - Great Crested Newts are amphibians and not reptiles. This survey cannot be used as a substitute survey for Great Crested Newts.
  - The Parish Council believes that the survey was not carried out during the most profitable months of activity for Reptiles, those being April, May and September, but that it was squeezed in at the beginning of the hibernation period, which is mostly October to March. Thus, it resulted in no reptiles being found during the seven visits from 04/10/18 to 12/10/18.
  - There are anomalies with the survey report. Table 1 states that the 1st visit was on the 04/10/18, the 2nd was on 02/10/18 and the 7th visit was on 13/10/18 (Pages 6 & 7) and it makes reference to the site being of 7 dwellings (a previous refused application) instead of 6 dwellings (this application).
  - The Parish Council questions the results of the survey because of the low and limited experience of the two surveyors (Page 7).
4. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal -
  - The appraisal makes reference that GCNs are known to be present in ponds in Little Downham Local Nature Reserve, of which the closest is 340m south of the site. The Parish Council informs that surveys carried out by Mr Terry Moore, a licensed Triturus cristatus surveyor since 1975, over the past 10 years confirms that GCNs are nesting in Holts Meadow Pond. Great Crested Newts have been seen in adjacent neighbouring properties of the development site, which strongly indicates there would be GNCs on site too. Evidence of GCNs is building up with the Wildlife Trust.
  - The appraisal also makes reference to 7 dwellings (a previous refused application) instead of 6 dwellings (this application).

The Parish Council considered its comments based on members views and following direct representations from local residents expressing objections in correspondence and attending the Council's meeting.

7.45pm Three parishioners left.

- 1.3 **18/01496/FUL** Mr & Mrs D Gableman, 15 Second Drove, Lt Downham – Annex to existing dwelling.

**Resolved** - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.

- 1.4 **18/01515/OUT** Mr M Blakey, Land adjacent to Woodlea, Cophall Drove, Lt Downham – Proposed dwelling, access and associated site works.

**Resolved** - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.

- 1.5 **18/01426/FUL** Mr & Mrs Taylor, land rear of 71 Main Street, Pymoor – change of use from agricultural land to equestrian land, erection of stable building, piping section of ditch to form access between fields and excavation to form pond and ground modelling formed from arisings.

**Resolved** - Little Downham Parish Council had no concerns regarding this application.

**Planning matters cont...**

**For information only:**

- 1.6 ECDC - Applications approved: 18/01040/FUM, 18/01093/FUL, 18/01095/FUL, 18/01102/FUL,

**104/18 FINANCE**

1. **Monthly Internal Audit** was carried out by Cllrs CE Hall and G Ord.
2. **To review current financial status 2018/19 & budget proposals 2019/20** – The budget update 2018/19 and the 2019/20 proposed budget, issued to members with their agenda, were reviewed. The Clerk’s supporting notes were noted. The Council deferred discussion of the BMX track to the next meeting when grass cutting specifications would be reviewed.

8.01pm Cllr KO Winters left the meeting and returned at 8.06pm.

8.04pm Cllr DJ Parson left the meeting and returned at 8.09pm.

8.12pm Cllr JL Waters left the meeting and returned at 8.15pm.

**Resolved unanimously to approve the 2018/19 budget review.**

The Council deferred formal approval of the 2019/20 proposed budget and Precept to the next meeting.

3. **To approve transfer of funds from Savings accounts** - The Clerk reported that the Council would need a transfer of £63,000 in total from its savings accounts to add to the general reserves to cover anticipated expenditure (including Pavilion Refurbishment) to the end of the financial year 2019. It was proposed by the Clerk that £20,000 be transferred from the Nationwide Account instant access account and £43,000 transferred from the United Trust 100-day notice Account. Both would be transferred to the Parish Council’s nominated current account at Lloyds Bank. Instant access was available from the United Trust Account subject to a penalty of loss of interest for that period. The three account signatories must authorise the transfers in writing.

**Resolved unanimously to authorise a £20,000 transfer from the Nationwide Account and £43,000 transfer from the United Trust 100-day Notice Account to the Parish Council’s nominated current account at Lloyds Bank with notice given as required, to transfer the funds when needed and to accept the withdrawal penalty if funds are needed prior to the notice period expiry.**

Cllrs JL Waters, CE Hall and GJ Hayter-Smith signed the transfer withdrawal forms.

Following a request from Andy Knott Construction Ltd, it was proposed by Cllr RA Maxey and seconded by Cllr G Hayter-Smith and unanimously agreed to accept an interim payment invoice.

**Resolved unanimously to transfer £25,000.00 from Lloyds Deposit account to the Current account and authorise a £25000.00 interim payment to Andy Knott Construction Ltd following receipt of an invoice.**

4. **To review and approve revised Pension Discretions Policy** - In accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme, the Pensions Discretions Policy was reviewed and updated. It was proposed by Cllr MM Oldfield and seconded by Cllr CE Hall to approve the revised Pension Discretions Policy. **A vote result was: In favour (9) and Abstentions (1).**

**Resolved to approve the revised Little Downham Parish Council Pensions Discretions Policy.**

A copy of the approved policy would be sent to LGSS Pension Services.

5. **To approve bills and other items for payment** – It was proposed by Cllr CE Hall and seconded by Cllr G Ord.

**Resolved unanimously to approve cheque nos. 001094 & 001095, BACS payments 784 – 792 and direct debits for the total sum of £7390.74\*, as listed below:**

Cheques

001094 – A Fretwell	Mole catcher	80.00
001095 – Roland Fletcher	Holts Spinney kissing gate	844.80

Online payments:

Cartridgesave.co.uk (cc)	Printer ink & toner	132.00
1 & 1 internet (cc)	Website package	57.53
Timpson (cc)	Padlock keys	16.00
Bevis Shoe Repairs (cc)	Key cut	5.25
Wilko (cc)	Storage boxes	14.00
Wilko (cc)	Storage boxes	10.00
Theengravingshop.co.uk (cc)	Eagles Lane Infants School plaque	95.50
Little Downham Village Hall	B/Café Meetings & sessions	288.00

Little Downham Village Hall	Council meetings	22.50
Truelink Ltd	Grass cutting - Parish	771.48
Truelink Ltd	Grass cutting - Verges	270.00
September staff salary payments and expenses		2489.64
September pension payments		1,243.92
HM Revenue & Customs	PAYE & NI contributions	774.94

#### Direct Debits

Anglian Water	LNR Utilities	100.84
Anglian Water Business Ltd	LD Rec Utilities	25.64
BT	Telephone charges	111.70
EDF Energy	LD Rec Utilities	37.00*

[\*The EDF direct debit on the payment list should have read £37.00 and not £39.00 as listed]

The Clerk was instructed to contact Anglian Water to request a leakage allowance assessment on the bill for extra water charged in the Local Nature Reserve following a leak with the trough.

### 105/18 **COUNCIL MATTERS**

1. **CAPALC AGM Report and membership for 2019/20 - Cllr MM Oldfield** – Cllr Oldfield reported on the details of the AGM, that CAPALC office was now in Pidley and they had launched a new website. CAPALC is the Council's link to NALC for knowledge, advice and model documents. CAPALC Chairman introduced its re-vitalisation project for CAPALC and the CEO presented an update on the new training courses this year around GDPR and Finance. Cllr Oldfield felt that CAPALC could do better, but recommended that the Council continued to affiliate with CAPALC for support and the NALC connection. It was proposed by Cllr MAC Seidler and seconded by Cllr MM Oldfield to affiliate to CAPALC for 2019/20. **A recorded vote result was as follows: In favour (6) - Cllrs CE Hall, GJ Hayter-Smith, RA Maxey, MM Oldfield, MAC Seidler and JL Waters, Against (1) - Cllr KO Winters, Abstentions (3) – Cllrs JW Barker, G Ord and DR Parson Resolved by a majority decision to approve affiliation to CAPALC for 2019/20.**

### 106/18 **PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND ASSETS**

1. **Lt Downham Pavilion Refurbishment – update (Min.91/18.1)** – Work began on 29/10/2018. Stud walls erected, kitchen extended, changing room toilets and shower walls removed, middle changing room door bricked up and the new disabled toilet drain installed through the kitchen floor. New doors and window have been installed. Contractors are working hard to complete by Christmas, as requested. Due to the extended kitchen, the quote did not include additional units and new appliances, which was are being quoted as around £5000. It was proposed by Cllr RA Maxey and seconded by Cllr GJ Hayter-Smith to request a contribution from the Downham Feoffees Charity. The Charity's next meeting is 27/11/2018. **Resolved unanimously to request financial assistance from the Downham Feoffees Charity to fund the new kitchen units and appliances at the Pavilion.**
2. **The Holts Sheep Meadow – to review use outside of grazing period** - It was reported that members of the public had advertised on Facebook about using The Holts Sheep Meadow for dogs. Concern was raised by some councillors that this could be a liability issue for the Council and as the Council had no ruling or policy on this, it needed to be discussed. The sheep grazer expressed concerns that dog faeces could cause worms and, worse than that, a disease that causes miscarriages in Sheep. **Resolved unanimously to only allow Sheep grazing in Holts Meadows, to padlock and chain the Meadows gate outside of the grazing season and to install notices informing that the Sheep Meadow is not open for public access or dogs.**
3. **Lt Downham Fete Committee – request permission to hold a Fete on Saturday 01/06/19 in Lt Downham recreation area** – Cllr Oldfield informed that the Fete was being held on 08/06/19 so as not to a clash with the school half term. **Resolved unanimously to grant permission for the Fete Committee to hold the Fete in Lt Downham Recreation Area on Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> June 2019.**

9.10pm Having declared a prejudicial interest in the next item, Cllrs Waters left the meeting.

4. **Mrs J Waters – Request use of Pavilion facilities and field for New Year's Eve Party** – The party is to be held in a marquee on the field with a floodlight for the children to play in the play area. The Pavilion kitchen would be used for cooking burgers and hot dogs and toilet facilities are required. The Council expressed that generators would be needed for outdoor lights and heating

because the Pavilion electrics would not cope with the demand. It was questioned what the fire safety occupancy was in the Pavilion and noted that the Fire Chief had stated up to 60 persons. The clerk was instructed to consult with the Chief Fire Officer C Strickland again for revised figures following the retention of the exit door in the rear changing room, which now allowed to exits from the corridor. It was proposed by Cllr KO Winters and seconded by Cllr RA Maxey.

**Resolved unanimously to grant permission for use of the field and Pavilion kitchen and toilet facilities for the Community New Year's Eve party on 31/12/2018, on the proviso that the floodlight and heating is provided by outside generators and the fire safety occupancy of the Pavilion is confirmed by Chief Fire Officer C Strickland.**

9.25pm Cllr Waters was invited back to the meeting.

#### **107/18 PARISH MATTERS**

1. **Conservation Group Meeting Report (Cllr JW Barker)** – The next Group meeting is 28/11/18.
2. **To consider installation of Lt Downham Infants School Plaque (Min.153/15.2)** – After a long delay in finding facts about the school, the Clerk obtained information from the Lt Downham CCAN Archives website and produced a plaque with the following inscription: To commemorate the site of LITTLE DOWNHAM INFANTS SCHOOL Erected by Subscription 1855 Closed 1970. It was agreed that an ideal location for the plaque would be on the old playground wall that sits between the Feoffees Allotments and No. 5 Eagles Lane and is the only remaining part of the old school. Unfortunately, the wall needs restoration work in order to secure the plaque to it. It was suggested that the installation of the plaque be passed over to the Feoffees Charity.
3. **To consider locations for ECDC Dog Fouling Public Space Protection Order Signs** – It was suggested that signs be requested and placed at the top of Hurst Lane, on Cannon Street, Lawn Lane, the recreation area and conservation areas in Lt Downham; in School Lane and Pymoor Lane in Pymoor and on all dog bins in the parish.

9.35pm Due to a long working day, Cllr MAC Seidler gave apologies and left the meeting

#### **108/18 HIGHWAYS**

1. **Replies re matters reported from previous meetings:**
  - 1.1 **Second Drove, Lt Downham (Min.78/18.2.4)** - Work on the drove was to begin 30/11/2018. It was not known if Third Drove would be done at the same time.
  - 1.2 **Chapel Lane hedge and verge (Min.19/18.6)** – CCC Local Highways Officer informed that the planted area at the side of 54A was not public highway but part of No. 54A garden. She had looked into it a few years ago and agreed to put marker posts along the edge at the property owner's request to help protect it from being overrun. She agreed it needed some tidying up but did not consider it an issue at the moment.
2. **To report current matters of concern:**
  - 2.1 **Footpath No 51 (off West Fen Drove, Lt Downham)** – A single and double gates approximately 350 m west require maintenance work.
  - 2.2 **Sutton Scouts' Santa's Sleigh** – The Council had no objections to a request by Sutton Scouts to drive their Santa's Sleigh around the parish on 08/12/18 between 6pm and 8pm, as a fundraising exercise. The Council thought it would be nostalgic and fun for the children to see.
3. **To review Parish Council Streetlight** – It was reported that the Council's bracket street light on Little Street, Lt Downham had been removed but the Council had not been notified why and by whom. Cllr Hall reported that Marshalls Lane's street light had also been removed. The Clerk was waiting for more information from Balfour Beatty about the missing lights because they did not remove them under the maintenance schedule.
4. **LHI 2019-20 - Replacement interactive speed signs in Lt Downham – to Approve Project Feasibility Summary and 14% Parish Council contribution** – The summary proposed to remove all four vehicle activated signs in Lt Downham and replace with one mobile activated speed sign. The Council did not want to lose four signs and replace with one moveable sign.  
**Resolved to withdraw the LHI application for 2019/20 and reconsider options for 2020/21.**

#### **109/18 REQUEST OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION** – None.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.53 pm.

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