

DRAFT Minutes of a Meeting of FULBOURN PARISH COUNCIL held in The Fulbourn Centre, Home End, Fulbourn on Wednesday, 8th December 2010.

Present: Councillor Patten (Chairman) and Councillors Bullen, Dawson, Doggett, Drage, Hardwick, Lacey, Lockwood, Mair, Newell, Scarr (and District), Stalley, Ward, Webdale and Williams (and District), County Councillor Clarke (until Item 137), Messrs D Cottee (left before Item 132), R Ward and the Clerk.

Public & Press - You are invited to attend the whole meeting and are welcome to speak at our Open Forum at the beginning of the meeting. There were no questions from the floor.

128. To accept apologies for absence. All present.

129. To notify the clerk of any declarations of interest that will be declared by members for any item to be discussed. None received.

130. To approve the minutes of the last meeting.

The Minutes were accepted and signed by the Chairman.

131. Matters arising from the last meeting.

131.1 The Firs. Road sign has now been erected.

131.2 Christmas Lights. These are now on the Copper Beech opposite the church. The Chairman thanked Cllrs Mair, Newell, Stalley, David Wright and local resident Keith for all their hard work.

131.3 SPEP. Cllrs Dawson and Mair attended a meeting on 22/11/10 which was interesting although solar panels are better incorporated in new buildings as renovations are not always cost effective.

131.4 Committee Meetings. All meetings must be held in public.

The following item was brought forward.

140.1 County Councillor Clarke reported on a Bill due to be passed in December on Localism. Due to budget reductions and too much spending in the past, a deficit has built up. To pay back this country's debt, it is estimated it is costing eight million pounds every hour. Parish Councils will be expected to step in to fill the gap and Cllr Clarke suggested this is borne in mind when setting next year's precept. He went on to explain what could be expected by Localism; how this would affect services in the community; powers to Parish Councils; financial aspect and the challenges local authorities would face.

Standing Orders were suspended when Mr Ward, our R.F.O. challenged the suggestion to increase the precept when this went against government advice that Council Tax would not increase for the next three years. Cllr Clarke replied a 20% increase in Parish Precept would equate to a 1% Council Tax increase and that at present Parish Councils' Precepts are not capped. Cllr Williams pointed out this Bill would not become law until November 2011 so Parish Councils would not have the powers suggested until the 2012/13 tax year. Cllr Clarke said budgets are being reduced over the next five years, so this was to plan ahead. Cllr Scarr reminded the meeting that spending under the Section 137 was permissible for the community.

Cllr Clarke then finished advising all the different meetings he has and will be attending and that all Councillors are much busier trying to work out how to save money.

132. Post Office Update.

The Council had written to the Co-operative Area Committee and a response had been expected by now. As Post Office Limited has provided the Co-operative Foods Ltd with all the information they requested, Members agreed to write again to the Co-operative for an update.

133. Report of a Meeting with Residents from Fulbourn Old Drift.

Cllr Williams proposed adopting the recommendations from the attached report, proposal seconded by Cllr Doggett and agreed by the Council. (Report at end of Minutes).

134. Communications.

The Committee has been working on updating the Fulbourn Guide; are trying to be more open with the new website and will be working with the Editor of The Mill to keep the village better informed.

135. Website Update.

Members had received a draft of the new website design and all approved the layout. Cllr Drage has been busy liaising with Nigel Copeman to provide a link to the Nature Reserve; working to promote both the Day Centre and Health Centre with more to follow when the website goes live. Training will be arranged. Cllr Patten thanked Cllr Drage for all her hard work in setting up the new site.

136. Guide & Brownie Hut Update.

Representatives from the Parish Council and FA4Y had met to discuss the offer from the Guides to purchase the Guide Hut and land. After much discussion, Cllr Webdale proposed, seconded by Cllr Ward that we write to the Guides accepting their offer subject to contract and write to our Solicitor's to deal with this matter.

137. The Swifts Update.

As residents from the flats above The Swifts had been experiencing problems with youths, Accent Nene has agreed to install a gate the whole length of the bottom entrance issuing swipe cars for access.

138. Positioning of Parish Notice Boards.

Members agreed to leave the notice board in School Lane as parishioners still use the post box.

139. Correspondence. The following items were received this month: -

139.1. Request for permission (retrospective) for gated access onto recreation ground from properties in Stonebridge Lane. Following discussion, this was agreed by Members although they would be responsible for hedge maintenance as this is in their ownership.

139.2 **NALC** – Information on Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity.

139.3 **Complaint** about lorries queuing in Wilbraham Road blocking driveways on 16 November. This was reported to S&B Herba Foods who apologised and explained why this happened. The situation will be monitored.

139.4 **Friends of Roman Road and Fleam Dyke** – November 2010 newsletter received.

139.5 **CPALC** – Draft Minutes of AGM held on 13/11/10.

139.6 **SCDC** – Arts Award 2011 to be held at Swavesey Village College on 30 March 2011.

Nominations requested for groups or individuals who have made a difference to the cultural life of their communities by 25 February 2011.

139.7 **Fulbourn Arts** – Request to use land opposite the War Memorial in Manor Walk to celebrate the work of Vital Communities by holding various events on 19 June 2011. Members wondered what event was actually planned here as the land is very uneven with protruding tree stumps. If used, it would also have to be at their own risk. The Clerk will reply.

139.8 **SCDC** – Outcome of the Gypsy and Traveller site options consultation to confirm our comments have been noted and accepted. The New Communities Portfolio Holder will consider a report on the consultation on 14 December 2010, this meeting is open to the public. Cllr Webdale will attend.

139.9 **SCDC** – Information on Guidance on Rural Affordable Housing and Developing an Exception Site.

139.10 **Navigus Planning** – Invitation to subscribe to quarterly Journal of Local Planning for an annual fee of £50.00. Members decided against this at this time.

139.11 **Cambridgeshire Acre** – (1) Offering assistance to help with “Switchover” in March 2011 and needs contacts of community leaders or anyone we believe might need help. The Clerk informed Members our local Police Officers had given talks to local residents.

(2) Looking for four communities that wish to lead the way in taking on the Big Society Challenge. In return Cambridgeshire Acre is offering their professional support services in exploring and implementing new Big Society projects.

139.12 **Unlock Democracy** – Asking for support by writing to Decentralisation Minister, Greg Clark MP demanding action from the government to reverse the national trend of community decline and promote local sustainability.

139.13 **E Hoffmann** – Wishes to start a mat-making project to decorate the walls at The Swifts. This was agreed by Members.

139.14 **SCDC** – Guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government on the abolition of the standards regime. Briefly the proposals are to revoke the Code of Conduct and abolish the requirement to have Standards Committees although local authorities may continue with these voluntarily.

139.15 **SCDC** – Information about Christmas Waste and recycling for parish notice boards.

139.16 **Cambridgeshire Community Foundation** – FA4Y to receive an award at a ceremony on 2/2/11, in Huntingdon.

139.17 **CCC** – Details of Winter Service. Confirmation Fulbourn Old Drift and Pierce Lane will be gritted as requested by Cllrs Scarr and Williams.

139.18 **SPEP** – Welcome Pack sent and details of 3 Workshops covering: - Training for Infra-red cameras; Heat Pumps (air-source and ground-source pumps) and Love Food Hate Waste. Cllr S Dawson will be the Parish Council Champion for the SPEP.

140. To receive reports from County and District Councillors.

140.1 Councillor Clarke – See after Item 131.

140.2 Councillor Scarr and 140.3 Councillor Williams issued the attached reports that were accepted.

141. To resolve the accounts for the month.

Wages: Clerk plus expenses.....786.87	Wages: Pavilion Cleaner.....98.45R
Quattro: 2 Notices.....10.60R	B’s Travel: Shopper & Post Office.....440.00
R Gammon: Erect signs.....140.00R	Petty Cash: Stamps & Admin.....54.66R
Dents: Keys cut.....102.81R	CCC: Street Lighting.....1,463.76
J Furner: Ground works.....137.47R	Konica Minolta: Photocopier.....101.98
Opal: November Phone calls.....26.67R	NRF Contracting: Tree & Hedge work.....705.00
PWLB: Loan repayment.....15,503.95	Ridgeons: Supplies.....202.28RC

Cllr Hardwick proposed, seconded by Cllr Doggett, that the accounts are passed. Agreed by Council.

142. To consider planning applications.

Minutes of a Meeting held on 24th November 2010.

Appeal: S/1163/10/F, 21 Teasel Way – Extension.

Permission received for S/1132/10, Land West of 8 Lucerne Close – Dwelling and Associated Car Parking.

New Application: S/1909/10, 76 Haggis Gap – Conservatory. Recommend approval.

Tree works:

Home End: Remove 1 Holly and crown reduce all trees on boundary of footpath. Following discussions and a site visit, this application has been amended.

Deemed Consent for work on the Judas Tree in Ludlow Lane received.

142.1 Other Reports Received: - Marshall's Consultative Committee; School Governor and Patients Participation Group (PPG). All reports were accepted by Council.

143. To receive items for inclusion on the next Agenda for decision and/or action.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 9.55pm.

Date of next Full Council Meeting – 12th January 2011.

Additional reports: -Items 133; 140.2 & 140.2

Notes of a Meeting at The Firs, Fulbourn Old Drift

Cllrs Patten and Scarr met on Tuesday 20/11/2010 with about 10 residents and David Lines (Traffic Engineer, Cambs County Council) at the Firs in order to discuss a number of concerns about access raised by residents.

1. It was agreed that the road surface is very poor from the entrance to Grove House to the railway. Even though it was covered in snow, all present had travelled it on many occasions without snow, and accepted this to be the case.
2. It was further noted that the snow had packed down, and made the surface slippery, to the extent that parts of it were dangerous to walk on, especially where the entrance to The Firs sloped down from the road.
3. David Lines explained that the County Council has a minimal budget for works other than potholes on the whole of its highways network. This being so, no large-scale works were likely at this location.
4. It was pointed out by and on behalf of residents that no work had been done on this stretch of Fulbourn Old Drift for a very long time. Equality of sacrifice is all very well for those of us who live on roads with a proper surface and footpath with street lighting, but is unfair to the minority who live on roads with none of these good things.
5. Local residents pointed out that they pay their rates, and in this respect at least, saw very little in return for it. They said that they would prioritise having a safe level stretch to walk on of footpath width. In reply to a question, they agreed that lighting the road would help considerably.
6. Whilst the County Council does not have enough in the budget to provide a lighting scheme, they will develop and install one if the Parish Council will fund it. It was accepted that this could be an adoptable scheme or a "footway lighting" scheme – in which case the parish Council will need to pay the costs of keeping the lamps lit as well as installation. Fulbourn Parish Council will need to balance the "upfront" costs of a (more expensive) scheme of adoptable lighting against the "ongoing" costs of an initially cheaper "footway" lighting scheme: South Cambs District Council last year took the decision no longer to fund "footway" lighting schemes.
7. The stretch of Fulbourn Old Drift between the level crossing at Yarrow Road and the made-up surface serves a number of properties: whilst the majority of these are in Fulbourn Parish (those at The Firs and the associated bungalow, and the farm), a significant number to the west of these are not.

8. Since the other properties accessed from this stretch of road are in the Parish of Teversham, it seems not only prudent but also just to approach Teversham Parish Council to seek a contribution for agreed works to be done in this area of our two parishes. This would produce a better scheme for both sets of parishioners, whilst keeping the costs bearable for each parish's ratepayers.

Recommendations:

- 1) To ask David Lines for a quotation for an adequate (but not extravagant) footway between Yarrow Road and The Firs;
- 2) To ask Highways (lighting section) for a quote for an adoptable scheme of lighting along the above stretch of highway;
- 3) To find out from Highways (lighting section) the costs of (i) installing and (ii) maintaining individual columns, which could form part of a "footway lighting" scheme;
- 4) To ask Teversham Parish Council to consider whether or not they will contribute proportionately to 1 and 2 or 3 above, and on receiving their answer, to refer the matter to Finance Committee for their recommendation to Council;
- 5) That on receiving the information as detailed above and the recommendations of Finance Committee, Council determines whether or not to proceed with highways improvements in this area.

Jo Patten Neil Scarr

District Councillor's Report, December 2010

Planning Committee considered at its meeting on December 1st an application for a dwelling at 8 Lucerne Close. I asked for this application to go before the committee with a site visit beforehand in order that members could see for themselves the relatively small site and the consequent difficulty for residents of the proposed bungalow being able to enter and leave the site by car in forward gear, along with the possible effects of a dwelling on the street scene. I also consider that (in view of the housing targets set by central government for the East of England) it is likely that more of these applications will come forward, so it is important for the elected members of the committee to indicate how they are minded to view these in practice. A verbal update will be given at the meeting.

The coalition government has stated its plans for the future of "affordable" and "social rented" housing – a category which includes council housing as well as the "affordable" housing we are able to get on new developments under planning policy. A welcome aspect of this is that the government has committed itself to abolishing the current subsidy regime – under which SCDC tenants pay half of their rents effectively to the government. This will allow councils to keep the rent monies for the purpose it was originally intended for – to maintain and improve tenants' homes. The government has also said that it intends to invest £100million to allow housing associations to refurbish empty properties and manage them for up to 10 years – this will provide homes at under market rent mainly to meet the needs of those who do not qualify for a social-rented home, but who need a rented home as a stage before buying, perhaps because they need to move around for work. In the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire area, it is possible to see how this might meet a need.

The government has announced reforms to the way housing waiting lists are managed. One purpose of this is to stop those with no real housing need from registering, and it is hard to disagree with this. A second purpose is to stop people registering who have no real prospect of qualifying for an allocation. Either this means much the same as the first, or it is a means of shortening waiting lists by excluding single (but not vulnerable) people and childless couples. ***If the latter is the case, then the answer is surely to build more council housing to meet the need, not to fiddle the figures?***

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Whilst those who already have tenancies in the “social rented” sector will keep their present conditions, all new tenancies will be on the basis of an “affordable rent tenancy” which will be on a fixed term of a minimum of two years, although each council can choose to grant tenancies for longer terms if they choose. I actually object strongly to the granting of short-term tenancies as a routine policy: it will mean that people do not feel secure in their homes, and will make it very difficult for people living in “social” housing to build stable and effective communities – there will be a feeling that people are “passing through”. On a personal note, we had that feeling when I lived at Thomas Road: each of us was there “until” – until we moved for another job, until we got a council house, or could afford to buy. Whilst it was a relatively stable and happy community, because we knew each other from work, it wasn’t a very smart area, as most people didn’t expect to be living there long. It will be up to SCDC to make the best it can of the new regime to ensure that we build stable communities.

The new proposed regime does give SCDC the opportunity to use a form of “introductory tenancy” as was discussed a few years ago. The logic behind “introductory” tenancies is that a council tenancy is frequently the first time a young person has had that sort of responsibility and might not be able to handle it. Young people might also find that as the only one of their peer group living away from home they are expected to host parties, possibly to the annoyance of their neighbours. Introductory tenancies give the council a useful weapon to deal with the sort of unintentional antisocial behaviour which might occur in such cases. It will again be up to the council to make the best of what the government gives us.

There is some confusion at present on the future of strategic level planning. It is the government’s intention to get rid of Regional Spatial Strategies – the “top-down” approach of setting housing targets at a regional level and apportioning them to districts to allocate to parishes, which is good news for us, and other villages close to Cambridge. Local authorities in Cambridgeshire are to begin work on gathering the evidence necessary to update Local Development Frameworks as needed in the future, and to produce a county-wide plan in case this is required or permitted by government. Local councils are keen to work together in a co-ordinated way to avoid a delay in the plan-making process, which might allow developers to promote large-scale developments and going to appeal on being refused by councils, known as “planning by appeal”.

In response to a question at November’s council meeting, the Leader of Council indicated that he had no intention of using Compulsory Purchase Orders against home-owners on the Windmill Estate. At the same meeting, Council passed a motion calling on the government to establish a new designation in Planning Law of a Dynamic Local Centre (defined as having a good range of local shops), where the change of use of a shop from non-food retail to selling food would require planning permission. The intention is to deal with the situation where the main retailers buy up a local shop (any shop) and change it into a food shop (which at present doesn’t need planning permission) and eliminate the competition and choice in the high street. If the government agrees with this proposal, change of use would be required and local people would have their say. The motion was supported by all members present.

Neil Scarr

My report to the December 2010 meeting of Fulbourn Parish Council

1. Since the November parish council meeting I have attended a council workshop on corporate governance and the full council meeting of South Cambridgeshire District Council on Thursday 25 November 2010. Before the parish council meets on Wednesday 8 December 2010 I am due to attend

a finance workshop and the inaugural meeting of the Wadlow Wind Farm Community Fund steering group on Monday 6 December 2010.

2. At the full council meeting I was pleased to be able to amend a motion to ask the government to consider requiring a new retail outlet to seek planning permission where it will duplicate an existing retail outlet even if the building it intends to occupy has planning approval for such activity. This will enable the local community and the parish council to make their views known to the local planning authority, which can then take these views into account when determining the application in regard to its planning policies. To my mind this is in line with the coalition government's aim of giving local communities the responsibility and the trust to make the right decisions for themselves.

3. At the same meeting I also asked a question of the Leader of the Council if he agreed that the council needed to review its previous decision not to use compulsory purchase order

powers for the redevelopment of the Windmill Estate. The Leader responded that should the parish council, Windmill Estate residents and local councillors wish this then it would be looked at again. This will be discussed at the Windmill Estate Steering Group meeting planned for Wednesday 15 December 2010.

4. The Liberal Democrat council group also attempted to overturn the council's proposal to change the contracts of existing council employees to reduce redundancy payments, but we were out voted. We consider this is morally wrong. I expect that this decision will lead to industrial action.

John Williams
December 2010

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