

## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FOXTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**HELD ON MONDAY, 3<sup>rd</sup> FEBRUARY 2014 AT 7.45 p.m.**

### **PRESENT**

Dr Grindley, Mr Bore, Mr Barnes, Mr Elliott, Mr McCreery, Mrs Macintyre, Mrs McFadzean and Mr Sutton

County Councillor Susan van de Ven

District Councillor Deborah Roberts

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Schulyer Newstead, SCDC Head of Housing Strategy and Development

Tony Welland, Architect

3 members of the public

### **APOLOGIES**

Dr Oakley (*also Mrs Roberts who said she would need to leave the meeting early*)

Dr Grindley welcomed all to the meeting, with special mention for Schulyer Newstead and Tony Welland

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

### **PRESENTATION RE AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN FOWLMERE ROAD**

Schulyer Newstead and Tony Welland (architect for the project) gave a joint presentation on the proposed development of a rural exception site at Hill Farm, Fowlmere Road, for the provision of affordable housing.

Ms Newstead said that good progress had been made, as a draft contract has been agreed between the legal representatives for SCDC and the owners of the site, Mr and Mrs Salmons. A plan of the proposed development was distributed showing 15 dwellings for rent. These included four 1-bed, six 2-bed and five 3-bed properties. The site allowed for 28 parking spaces including a few for visitors.

Dr Grindley asked when development might begin. Ms Newstead said that it was hoped to submit a formal planning application by the end of February. It was anticipated that the planning process would take about thirteen weeks so that, if the application were approved, work on the development could begin in August or September.

Mr Welland said the timetable depended on the planning application. Following consent tendering work would commence. He pointed out that all the properties faced

inwards so that rear gardens would face Fowlmere Road. The roadway would be built to adoptable standard and there would be hedges along the two main sides of the development.

Dr Grindley said the council needed to assess whether the proposals were in line with what the parish council would like to see and that the houses would be for Foxton people. Ms Newstead said that rural exception sites were for the provision of homes for local people. SCDC would be letting the properties at a social rent that would be lower than the rent for the usual affordable housing schemes.

Mr Bore questioned what would happen if there were insufficient demand from Foxton people. Ms Newstead said that there were already fifteen families on the waiting list for affordable housing. However, should there be insufficient demand, then the houses would be offered to people with a Foxton connection and, if necessary, the offer of this housing would be widened to people in nearby villages.

Mr Bore then raised the matter of “Right to Buy”. This was an important consideration for the council, as it would not wish to see the houses transferred into private hands and thus no longer available as affordable housing to rent. Eventually this could lead to the necessity of finding another site for affordable homes. Ms Newstead agreed that this was an important point and she needed to find out more about “Right to Buy” on a rural exception site. She said that tenants would be offered a ten-year tenancy so that, should tenants’ income improve considerably, they would be encouraged to move into the private sector. Should these houses be available for sale, they would be sold at a market value meaning that tenants would need to have a substantial income in order to buy.

Mrs McFadzean asked when the houses would be advertised for rental and Ms Newstead said that this would be within eight weeks of completion of the development.

Mr Welland pointed out that the houses that would be seen when approaching the village from the Fowlmere direction would have dormer windows so would have a lower profile than those nearer the village.

Mr Bore asked about footways, as presently there are no footways in Fowlmere Road, but this was not an aspect on which there was any information. A footway from the development into the village was considered necessary for safety reasons.

Mr Sutton said that the original plan had shown more houses facing Fowlmere Road and there had been no spur road as shown in the new plan – he had concerns that the spur might lead to further development of the land. Mr Welland said that the spur was only included to allow refuse vehicles to turn.

Dr van de Ven said she did not know what the county council’s policy was regarding the adoption of the road serving the development, but the road would be maintained either by CCC or SCDC. She said the question of the footway was important.

Dr van de Ven asked whether chimneys for the houses were a requirement. Mr Welland said that they were not although the design included fake chimneys as these served the purpose of breaking up the roofline.

Mr McCreery raised the matter of services such as streetlights. The provision of streetlights depended on whether the road were adopted, in which case the county

council would be obliged to install them. It was pointed out that in some cases the occupants did not want them.

It was confirmed that the houses would be well insulated and heated by external heat sink pumps. The clerk asked whether these might pose a noise problem, but was assured that the technology had improved greatly and there should be no problem.

Dr Grindley asked about surface water drainage. Mr Welland said that this would all be retained on site and discharged gradually.

The plot marked LAP on the plan was confirmed to be a play area, although not provided with play equipment, and it was also confirmed that the play area and the rest of the site would be maintained by SCDC.

Mr Barnes raised the question of possible development in the farmyard. Ms Newstead said that SCDC was not keen on private dwellings in this area.

Mr Bore thought it would be in the parish council's interest to purchase a ransom strip of land. Ms Newstead said that this would be a matter for the parish council to discuss with the owners of the land, but agreed to ask the question. Mrs Roberts pointed out that the landowner had been very good in all the negotiations, which was not always the case.

Dr Grindley asked councillors whether they were in favour of the development subject to design and all were agreed.

Ms Newstead suggested that, when the planning application was in its consultation stage, councillors emailed her with any questions they might have.

Mr Welland suggested holding an open meeting in the village at this stage and this was agreed to be the best procedure.

Dr Grindley thanked Ms Newstead and Mr Welland for coming to the meeting.

*At this point Ms Newstead, Mr Welland and Mrs Roberts left the meeting. The County Councillor's Report was moved up the agenda to allow Dr van de Ven to leave early.*

## **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Dr van de Ven reported as follows:

### **Melbourn Area Youth Development (MAYD)**

The youth work team led by Richard Jenkins wound up at the end of December. After having investigated possible new avenues for youth work provision, MAYD met, on 14<sup>th</sup> January, with Groundwork Hertfordshire, a well-established community development charity that runs youth clubs and other associated community projects focusing on a prevention and support angle. The group had now received an offer from Groundwork and would be meeting to discuss it in the near future. As expected, the cost of the service would be considerably higher than previously, though this came alongside Groundwork's excellent reputation. Dr van de Ven said the group had been talking with neighbouring parishes to keep them up to date and the MAYD group would be meeting tomorrow.

Unfortunately, Melbourn and Meldreth were suffering from antisocial behaviour issues that appeared to involve a range of people from the broader community and she

said it was frustrating that the group was unable to deploy the detached youth work component previously accessed via MAYD to help address this problem.

### Connecting Cambridgeshire

Dr van de Ven said that, in addition to the Superfast Broadband rollout, this programme involved a variety of measures to help small and medium sized businesses to become better connected, with advice and grants through the European Union and government funding. The programme would be publicised in mid-February.

### A10 cycle path progress

Dr van de Ven said that the current project was coming in under budget, and, at its recent meeting, the A10 Corridor Cycle Campaign was asked to prioritise how the project could be extended, bearing in mind that its aims must be to enhance “cycle links to Foxton Station.” It was agreed unanimously that solar studs to provide better night time visibility should be the first priority in order to establish a high standard for the path, followed by extending the cycle path upgrade northward from the Barrington Road slip road towards Harston. The meeting also heard that, if the Greater Cambridge City Deal came through, then it was very likely that funding for sustainable transport networks would enable the path to be extended to span the entire length of the A10 between Royston and Trumpington. Dr van de Ven said that the campaign group would re-seed the verges once the present programme of work was completed.

*There was some discussion about the City Deal including whether this might mean the County Council the City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council merging into one body.*

### Community Transport cuts

Whilst specific infrastructure funds from central government were welcome, revenue support for essential services was another matter. The proposed cuts to community transport could be worse, but were still very harmful and would affect residents who depended on transport as a lifeline. Under the current budget proposals, the situation would become cataclysmic in two years’ time, as community transport simply could not function without council grant support.

### Oil Club Rebate

The club would be receiving a rebate of £110, and Dr van de Ven had suggested that this money be sent to Royston and District Community Transport.

### Highways/Infrastructure

Dr van de Ven said she had been contacted by a Barrington Road resident, who had thoughtfully undertaken drainage clearance himself and would like Highways to take note – she had relayed this to CCC. Also, potholes in Hillfield and elsewhere outlined with white spray paint would be attended to. She had contacted Mike Cooper about the potholes, but he was unable to give a specific date for the work to be done.

### Budget

Dr van de Ven said that, as it was now the budget season, all the political groups would be going through the useful exercise of putting together alternative proposals. This meant that everyone's mind was focused and new ideas were being conceived.

Her own group had submitted a proposal for the sale of Shire Hall and most of the County Farms estate in order to reduce interest payments on borrowing and free up revenue for spending on road repairs and in a number of other urgent areas. Her group had also proposed amalgamating the various local authorities of Cambridgeshire to make efficiencies. These ideas had already been presented to colleagues in a cross-party forum and were received favourably. Dr van de Ven said that it would not change everything but it was something, although nothing would be formally decided until the budget meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> February.

#### Foxton Level Crossing mechanical breakdown Christmas Day

Though trains were not running that day, the public were not necessarily aware of that, and the flashing lights and warning signals at the level crossing signalled to drivers that they should not proceed over the crossing. Dr van de Ven had asked Network Rail for a report.

*Mr Bore asked what had happened at the crossing two days ago. It was confirmed that one of the barriers had broken off.*

### **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

No amendments were needed and Dr Grindley proposed that the Minutes of the previous Meeting, held on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2014, be signed as a true record. Mrs McFadzean seconded the proposal and all were agreed.

### **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising.

### **LEVEL CROSSING CLOSURE**

Mr Elliott reported that preparations for the forthcoming exhibition on Network Rail's proposals for closure of the level crossing at Foxton were all in hand. The exhibition would be held during half term from 17<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> February, and would be manned for three two-hour slots each day. Councillors were asked to enter their names on a schedule for the periods they would be able to attend. Posters and flyers had been designed and would need to be printed. The school had offered to lend boards to hold the posters. A printer at Linton would be able to do the printing most economically. Nine posters would be needed at a cost of £4.50 per poster if two A3 sized sheets were laminated together (otherwise double that amount for single A2 sized sheets). Flyers to be distributed to all Foxton households would cost £46. The post office had offered to distribute the flyers with the post and this suggestion was warmly welcomed and Mr Elliott suggested that the council make a thank-you gesture of chocolates for the post lady and post man.

Mr Elliott proposed that the council order the flyers and nine posters at the cheaper price, which would bring the total printing cost, Village Hall hire and the present of chocolates to £150. Mrs Macintyre seconded the proposal and all were agreed.

The flyers included a response form and Mrs McFadzean recommended that a deadline for return be set. All were agreed that the deadline should be 28<sup>th</sup> February and that words to this effect be included in the flyer.

## **COUNCIL WEBSITE**

Mr Elliott reported that the council now had a website albeit as yet without content. The website providers had admitted there had been a long delay and, in compensation, had added a couple of extra features. He said he would circulate the link to the new website to all councillors for their comments.

## **REPORTS FROM THE WORKING PARTIES**

### **RECREATION AND AMENITIES**

Mr McCreery reported as follows:

#### **Skatepark Project**

The detailed plan from the preferred bidder, Bendcrete, was presented at an open meeting in the Village Hall on 15<sup>th</sup> January. The project was well received and some useful input to the final design was received.

The final design and fixed price for the skatepark was agreed on 21<sup>st</sup> January. The agreed quotation and evidence of available funding was sent to WREN on 23<sup>rd</sup> January allowing them to issue their contract, which was received on 27<sup>th</sup> January. Mr McCreery said that he had a site meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> January with the Bendcrete site manager and, as might have been noticed, today David Salmons had taken part of the of the Recreation Ground fencing down to allow access for the track-laying lorry tomorrow morning. Subject to weather conditions, it was anticipated that the work would be completed by mid-March. An accredited Play Inspector would attend on the last day of construction and provide a safety report.

Malcolm Bore had helped to review the draft contract and Mr McCreery proposed the council now give official approval for the signing of the Bendcrete contract in the sum of £69,240 exclusive of VAT on behalf of the Parish Council. *Mr Bore asked who would be responsible for maintenance and Mr McCreery said that the Skatepark Group would continue to raise funds, but that the parish council would also need to contribute, although there should not be much need for substantial maintenance for some years.* Mrs Macintyre seconded the proposal and all were agreed. It was accepted that the Parish Council would have to fund the associated VAT of approximately £14,000 on the contract price between the date of payment and recovery of that sum from HM Revenue and Customs.

The Fund Raising Committee had held a successful Bingo Night in the Village Hall on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January and raised a further £550.

#### **Trees**

Following the Kask Report, Eastern Trees were due to carry out tree work this month. The December meeting had approved this expenditure together with a sum of £395 for a Picus test on the large Ash Tree on the Recreation Ground. It had subsequently been realised that a Picus test was also recommended for the Oak tree in Hall Close. Eastern Trees had quoted £470 to do the test on both trees. *Mr Sutton proposed the additional expenditure of £75 to enable the test to be carried out on both trees be approved. Mr McCreery seconded the proposal and all were agreed.*

Mr McCreery said that there were a number of trees bordering the Recreation Ground, which had been reported with broken branches etc. and some work would need to be

carried out to make the area safe and tidy and this would involve some additional costs.

### Recreation Ground

The fence between the Play Area and the trees bordering the Recreation Ground would be repaired this month.

Comments had been received about the Recreation Ground being muddy which was not surprising in the light of this year's weather. However, the group would consider laying rubber matting from the end of the Illingworth Way path along the front of the picnic bank to join up with the paving round the Village Hall/Pavilion.

Inspection of the Play Area equipment did not take place in December as expected and the firm responsible (Kompan) was being chased up.

### Sports Clubs

A meeting had been held on the Recreation Ground yesterday. Owing to the extremely wet winter, very little training had taken place under the floodlights with the Football clubs having to hire premises elsewhere. Football matches for two Dynamo Foxton age group teams as well as the Foxton Football Club had been held regularly. The level of wear was similar to that in the previous year but covered a larger area. Top dressing would be applied by Richard Barnes in the Spring.

The possibility of purchasing a second-hand sprayer would be looked into and quotations would be sought for over-seeding the playing areas.

### Lighting on the Recreation Ground

The lights had been adjusted - for some reason they had been moved on to the setting for continual lighting.

### W I Bench

Mr McCreery said that the estimated cost for positioning a new bench on the Recreation Ground was £300. The group had received £250 for the bench that was damaged in Station Road. *It was agreed to go ahead with a new bench in the spring after reviewing seat heights available.*

### **FINANCE**

Mr Sutton gave details of the Barclays Bank Accounts as follows:

Deposit Account (This included a transfer of £890 from the Current Account)	£17,201.64
Current Account (This included a VAT refund of £653.85, a cheque for £250 from Shire Tree Surgery re the damaged seat and a transfer to the Deposit Account of £890)	£52.64
10-day Notice Account (This included interest of £21.85 applied 1 <sup>st</sup> February)	£22,887.40

Mr Sutton proposed the following cheques for payment:

Foxton Village Hall (re-charge of electricity for streetlights y/e 31/12/13)	£82.56
J E Burns (salary February)	£313.04

Dr Grindley seconded the proposal and all were agreed that these payments, totalling £395.60 be made and that £395 be transferred from the Deposit Account to the Current Account.

Mr Sutton concluded by saying that SCDC had confirmed receiving the parish council's precept request for 2014/15.

### **PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Dr Grindley reported as follows:

The committee had met on 28<sup>th</sup> January when the following application had been considered:

Mr and Mrs Mahony	Application No. S/2709/13/FL for ground and first floor extensions and alterations at 10 West Hill Road
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The response to SCDC was that the council recommended approval, but wished to re-iterate its concern that the east-facing first floor window had been installed without planning permission, and requested that it be fitted with obscured glass to protect the privacy of the neighbouring property.

#### **Applications approved:**

Mr and Mrs Aynsley	Application No. S/2446/13/FL for installation of dormer window to front elevation at 43 Station Road Usual conditions
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Mr Grant Wilson	Application No. S/2485/13/FL for alterations to rear flat roof extension and rear flat roof side garage with pitched roofs and installation of solar panels to front elevation Usual conditions
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### **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

There was no report.

### **POLICE LIAISON**

Mr Barnes said that the date of the next liaison meeting had been changed to 11<sup>th</sup> February and reported a number of recent offences in the village.

Barons Lane	Burglary
Edis Way	Antisocial behaviour
Foxton Station	Theft (non-payment of rail fare)
Hardman Road	Violence (under investigation)
Recreation Ground	Theft

Rowlands Close

Antisocial behaviour

### **RECREATION GROUND TRUST**

Mrs McFadzean said that a meeting of trustees would take place immediately after the present meeting.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

The clerk summarised the correspondence received since the last meeting, which is given in full below:

- 1) Letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> January from RoSPA enclosing copies of its current Play Area inspection and Training brochures.
- 2) Letter dated 14<sup>th</sup> January from Keith Miles, SCDC Planning Policy Manager, re the council's January 2014 update of Village Services and Facilities: enclosing a leaflet detailing the council's current information on Foxton and requesting a review and feedback (*for reply by 28<sup>th</sup> February*).
- 3) Letter dated 29<sup>th</sup> January from CCC Adult Social Care re Housing Related Support Tender – Update for Parish Council Members enclosing the second “Member Briefing” about the council's Housing Related Support for Older People project.
- 4) “Clerks & Councils Direct” magazine, January 2014.
- 5) Various e-mails from CAPALC.

### **VISITORS' QUESTIONS**

Mr and Mrs Shaw (Barrington Road) expressed their concerns about Network Rail's proposals for the closure of the level crossing, as they would be greatly affected. They said they would like to put forward an alternative proposal to re-route the A10 at the exhibition to be held between 17<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> February

*There was some discussion about this, but it was agreed that the exhibition was solely to publicise Network Rail's proposals and could not be used as platform for alternative proposals. However, the Shaws would be free to use the comments section of the flyer, to be distributed before the exhibition, to set out their views. All comments from residents would be used as feedback.*

Mr Howard reported a very large pothole at the bottom end of St Laurence Road. The clerk agreed to contact Mike Cooper at the CCC Highways Department both about this pothole and others in Shepreth Road towards the A10.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The clerk said she had received the offer of two framed aerial views of the village for the council office from Betty Abbotts and asked whether the council would like to accept the offer. All were agreed that the views would be gratefully received. The clerk would follow the matter up with Mrs Abbotts.

Mr Barnes said that the new committee for the History Society had been formed and the society would do anything in its power to help the council regarding the extension of Foxton's Conservation Area.

**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

It was confirmed that this would be held on **Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2014** at **7.45pm** in the **Village Hall Meeting Room**.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.40pm.