

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FOXTON PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY, 5th MARCH 2007, AT 7.45 p.m.

PRESENT

Mr Pusey, Mr Hockley, Mr Barnes, Dr Brooksbank,
Dr Grindley, Mr Kennedy, Dr McKeown, Miss Thake

County Councillor David McCraith

District Councillor Mrs Roberts

IN ATTENDANCE

3 members of the public

APOLOGIES

Mr Chilton

Mr Pusey welcomed all to the meeting. He began by saying that Stan Barnes, a former Chairman of Foxton Parish Council and a former District Councillor for Foxton and Fowlmere, had passed away. Mr Pusey said that Stan Barnes had been greatly respected in both these roles by all who knew him. Mrs Roberts said Mr Barnes had been held in the highest esteem and that a row of cottages in Fowlmere had been named after him.

Mr Challis (in the visitors' seats) paid tribute to Stan and reminded those present that he received the full support of villagers regardless of their political views.

The funeral would be held at 2.15pm on Thursday, 15th March, at the crematorium, and the Village Hall Lounge had been booked for refreshments following the service.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Two amendments were needed:

i) On page 92, under "Planning", last paragraph, 4th sentence, this should be amended to read "On advice received from CALC, it was agreed that decisions regarding the council's planning application should be deferred until a meeting of the Planning Committee on 15th February".

ii) On page 93 under the Recreation Ground Extension report (Bike park), last paragraph, the sentence "Dr Grindley declared an interest, but it was felt he need not leave the room: he took no part in the discussion of the item or the decision." should be inserted between the first and last sentence.

Mr Kennedy proposed that, with these amendments, the Minutes of the previous meeting, held on Monday, 5th February 2007, should be signed as a true record. Dr Brooksbank seconded the proposal and all were agreed.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Sports pavilion Locks

Dr McKeown had completed his investigation, which showed that one component was faulty and had submitted a report to Dr Grindley. Dr Grindley had written to Middleton Hardware requesting the manufacturer's name, but had not yet received a response.

Former Q8 Garage

Mrs Roberts had nothing further to report.

Correspondence

Item 3 – Consultation paper from Postwatch

Mr Pusey said that the clerk had prepared a draft response, which he recommended the council adopt. The consultation paper and draft response were circulated during the meeting.

Item 8 – Code of Conduct Consultation

Mr Pusey said the hard copy of the consultation document had arrived during the past month and had been passed to him by the clerk. Mr Pusey's view was that the proposed amendments would make life marginally easier for councillors. Those that dealt with confidentiality and personal interest were of particular note. One additional clause was proposed making bullying an offence. Mr Pusey said he had been pleased to note that there was recognition that where a member's interest was no greater than any other member of the public, he/she need not declare a personal interest.

Mrs Roberts expressed the view that the code of conduct was a bad set of rules, which had not undergone parliamentary scrutiny.

CONSIDERATION OF A COMPLAINT BY COUNCILLOR GRINDLEY ON THE CONDUCT OF THE COUNCIL

Dr Grindley said that he had not lodged a complaint, but asked for information and he had made this clear to CALC in a telephone conversation in the course of which it emerged that CALC had not realised that councillors were also members of the Recreation Ground Trust.

Mr Pusey said that the agenda item for the February meeting "Update on planning application for Recreation Ground Extension prior to presentation to Planning Committee" was included on the advice of CALC, which he had instructed the clerk to seek, as he was concerned that councillors had not had sufficient opportunity to study the plans for the planning application (that the council was legally required to make) before the meeting on 5th February. He said he had asked Dr Grindley in a series of e-mails to make the plans available, the latest being 29th January, without a response.

Mr Barnes said that e-mails are now regarded as hard copy and that councillors should be careful how they are worded.

Other councillors, although some were somewhat dissatisfied, considered that "it was water under the bridge".

The clerk said she had read through the document “Standing Orders and Chairmanship” and this states that “---a councillor who is dissatisfied by the chairman’s ruling may invite the council to disagree with it. Such appeals against the chair ought to be rare”.

Mr Barnes moved that the council move to the next item on the agenda. Mr Kennedy seconded the motion and **all were agreed**.

REPORTS FROM THE COMMITTEES

RECREATION AND AMENITIES

Mr Chilton had e-mailed the clerk saying he had nothing to report – it had been a quiet month.

FINANCE

Mr Hockley reported that a letter had been received from the Audit Commission proposing the extension of Moore Stephen’s appointment as auditor to Foxton Parish Council for the financial year 2006/07 and inviting comment. *The council agreed that it was content with this proposal.*

The council had also received a letter from Scotsdales with an application form for a credit account card. *As it was likely that the council would make future purchases from Scotsdales, it was agreed that the clerk should complete the application form.*

Mr Hockley gave details of the bank accounts as follows:

Deposit Account	£16,771.07
(This included a grant from the Heritage Lottery fund of £1,250, the Tennis Club rent for 2006 of £5 and a contribution of £6,250 from the RGT to FPC)	
Current Account	£56.23
Cambridge Building Society	£13,775.16

Mr Hockley proposed the following cheques for payment:

B Hockley (reimbursement for gift of wine to the internal auditor, Peter Sutton)	£112.29
C Cairns (reimbursement for postage of 6 Dovcote/Meadow Educational packs)	£6.54
J E Burns (salary February/March)	£568.13
J E Burns (expenses January/February)	£29.80
V W Mead (refuse collection and maintenance, February)	£29.74

Mr Barnes seconded the proposal and all were agreed.

Finally, Mr Hockley said that RGT would be making a £50 contribution to Mr Suttons’ present in recognition of his work for the RGT. A letter of thanks had been received from Mr Sutton and was included in the circulating correspondence.

- 4) Electrical installations – do these meet the regulations?
- 5) Concern was expressed that the Portacabin on site might be being used as residential accommodation.

Minutes of the Planning meeting held on 22nd February (*postponed from 15th February*) had been circulated to members. Mr Pusey said that all members should see the full application for the use of the Recreation Ground Extension, including the application form and supporting plans, before submission to SCDC.

Dr McKeown thought this was unnecessary, as the design plans and other papers had been seen by the RGT Trustees and by the Extension to the Recreation Ground Committee, and said CALC's advice that the application be dealt with by the Planning Committee should be ignored. Mr Pusey said this was inadvisable.

Some changes had already been incorporated viz the Foxtan Gardens Association not being a registered charity and the width of the huts on the allotments to be 1.2 metres.

Dr Grindley had been in touch with Paul Sexton (SCDC Planning Department) requesting advice, but had not yet had a response. Dr Grindley also pointed out that a meeting of the parish council might be needed to authorise additional expenditure if the FGA plans had to be submitted as a separate application.

Dr McKeown proposed that, as the clerk had pointed out, if a separate application were needed the council would have no choice but to do so, authorisation for any additional expenditure should be approved by the council now. Mr Kennedy seconded the proposal and all were agreed.

Mr Barnes then reported on an extract from the EEAPTC news, January, listing the key proposed changes by the Secretary of State to the East of England Plan. These included:

- Job growth 12,000 more than that proposed by the panel's proposal for 440,000
- A further increase of 2,500 in overall housing from the panel's 505,500 (itself an increase of 27,500 homes on the Draft Plan's 478,000) representing additional growth in the Harlow area
- Endorsement of the Panel's recommendation to retain only four sub-regions including Cambridge, which would include the market towns of Royston, Saffron Walden, Haverhill and Newmarket
- Aim of absolute reduction of traffic in Plan period rejected as unrealistic
- A commitment to match development with water efficiencies with EERA to set a per capita per day consumption target to monitor

There was considerable scepticism about the last item owing to the region being one of the driest in the country with water supplies not adequate for the existing level of housing.

It was agreed that there was little point at this stage in making further representations from the council.

POLICE LIAISON REPORT

Miss Thake reported a serious incident that had occurred one Sunday in the past month. An explosive device had been put through the letterbox of a house in Fowlmere Road and two youths had been seen running up Hillfield. The police had been informed but nothing further had been heard. There was a report of eggs being thrown at two houses in the village.

RECREATION GROUND TRUST AND COMMUNITY BUILDING

Mr Pusey said he had been invited to open the allotments on Saturday, 3rd March, and had turned the first sod. The water supply was not yet functioning and he had e-mailed Martyn Smith (CCC) about this. The housing for the water supply had not yet been fitted with a means of securing the water supply from wrongful use. *Dr Brooksbank said this matter should be looked into.*

There had been an exchange of communications regarding the Cricket Club lease.

The revised Trust Deed was at the final stage and was with the Trust's solicitors.

Dr Grindley advised the council that the secretary of the Cricket Club had resigned and that correspondence should be sent to him.

Recreation Ground Extension

Dr Brooksbank said that Mr Pusey had covered most of the points he had been going to report. The one remaining item was that the "Awards for All" grant had been turned down. However, as the RGT finances had not been properly understood – in particular the Trust's long-term commitments – "Awards for All" was willing to accept a challenge to its verdict. Mr Pusey agreed to draft a response.

Dr McKeown said that fencing for the bike-park had been approved at the last meeting and that he was seeking two quotations.

Community Building Issues

A report was expected about the Velux windows and it appeared there might be a case against the County Council on this matter. As regards the external lighting, the electrician had not been able to find a fault and more investigation was needed. In the meantime the Village Hall Trust would have to bear the cost of the lights being on all the time.

Mr Barnes asked whether the light in the hall had been fixed and it was confirmed that it had.

CORRESPONDENCE

The clerk summarised the correspondence received in the past month, which is given in full below:

- 1) Letter dated 6th February from NALC re review of the Quality Town and Parish Council Scheme.
- 2) Letter dated 8th February from the CCC Definitive Map Officer re the clunch-pit footpath outlining the procedure by which an application can be made to

record the route on the Definitive map: explanatory booklet forwarded later.
Previously passed to DP

- 3) Letter dated 13th February from the CCC Countryside Access Team Leader re countryside access issues: enclosing an information sheet on waymarking paths and a leaflet entitled “Cambridgeshire Green Vision – Enhancing the Quality of Life”.
- 4) Letter dated 14th February from the SCDC Democratic Services Officer re parish council details and the Data Protection Act.
- 5) Letter dated 16th February from Cambridgeshire ACRE re Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Community Life Awards Scheme 2007 (successor to the “Village of the Year” competition): enclosing leaflet.
- 6) Letter dated 20th February from the SCDC Corporate Manager for Policy, Performance and Partnerships in response to the copy sent to SCDC of the council’s letter to Ms Selwyn-Smith supporting the campaign to save Milton Country Park.
- 7) Letter dated 22nd February from the SCDC Policy, Performance and Partnerships Department updating the situation regarding Milton Country Park.
- 8) Letter dated 22nd January (but received late February) from the Local Democracy Directorate, Communities and Local Government enclosing a consultation paper on a revised Model Code of Conduct for Local Authority members: responses to be received by 9th March. *Previously passed to DP*
- 9) Information from CEMEX including:
 - Notes of the Liaison Group meeting held on 18th January
 - Update from the Environment Agency
 - Barrington Emissions Review
- 10) Letter dated 26th February from The Wildlife Trust enclosing an advisory leaflet on Willows.
- 11) Letter dated 28th February from the SCDC Trees and Landscape Assistant re a meeting to be held at Cambourne on 27th March re the roles and aims of the department. *Passed to GB*
- 12) CCC memo enclosing Mobile Library timetables for display.
- 13) Letter dated 23rd February from Cambridge Dial-a-Ride enclosing leaflets and a poster about the services provided.
- 14) Information from CALC including:
 - Memo re May 2007 Parish Elections enclosing election posters and leaflets (*retained*) and details of free election workshops for prospective councillors at St Ives on Saturday 10th March and Monday, 19th March.
 - Memo re three day closure of CALC office 7-9th March 2007
 - Memo re CALC special “Umbrella” scheme with the Association of Burial Authorities

- Memo re VAT workshop, to be held at Bluntisham Village Hall on Wednesday 27th June from 9.45am-2.00pm including refreshment break and lunch (£30 for first person, second person free) together with booking form
- 15) Local Council Review, March 2007
 - 16) EEAPTC news, January 2007 (regional report for parish councils)
 - 17) Memo from the St George's Day National Organiser enclosing a guide to taking part in St George's Day (23rd April 2007).
 - 18) COPE Newsletter, March 2007 enclosing exercise and physical fitness questionnaire and Mission Statement leaflets.
 - 19) South Cambs magazine, Spring 2007
 - 20) Leaflet re RoSPA training courses.
 - 21) Publicity material from Sutcliffe Play.

Mr Pusey recommended the council undertake the procedure by which the County Council could record the route of the clunch-pit footpath on the Definitive Map by completing the application form. All were agreed.

It was also agreed that the response to the Postwatch consultation should be returned as drafted by the clerk.

VISITORS' QUESTIONS

Mrs Howell asked whether it was true that RGT was no longer challenging the County Council on the issue of the external light to the Community Building.

Mr Pusey said that the letter from Mark Greenhall (CCC) had indicated that the lights could be returned to their original position and that RGT had reluctantly agreed the County Council was unlikely to accept any responsibility.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Dr McKeown said he had contacted Ian Sanderson about the information given in the last village booklet and had made a start on updating it.

The clerk said she had received some posters inviting parishioners to stand as councillors in the forthcoming election. Once she had filled them in she would let each councillor have one to display in the village.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was confirmed that this would be held on **Monday, 2nd April 2007, at 7.45pm** in the **Meeting Room** of the **Village Hall**

The **Annual Parish Meeting** would be held on either **23rd or 30th April 2007, at 7.45pm** in the **Meeting Room** of the **Village Hall**

The **Annual General Meeting** would be held on **14th May 2007, at 7.45pm** in the **Meeting Room** of the **Village Hall**.

There being no further business, the meeting at 10.05pm.