

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FOXTON PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY, 5th DECEMBER 2011 AT 7.45 p.m.

PRESENT

Dr Oakley, Dr Grindley, Mr Bore, Mr Barnes, Mr Elliott, Mr McCreery, Mrs McFadzean and Mr Sutton
County Councillor Susan van de Ven
District Councillor Deborah Roberts

IN ATTENDANCE

1 member of the public

APOLOGIES

Mrs Macintyre

Dr Oakley welcomed all to the meeting.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Parish Councillors have received a dispensation from the SCDC Standards Committee to permit them to discuss, without prejudice, matters concerning Foxton Recreation Ground Trust of which they are all trustees and thus have a personal interest.

There were no other declarations of interest.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

One amendment was needed:

On page 54, the last sentence under “Recreation and Amenities” should read:

“Mr Barnes reported that he had been advised by the Head Teacher at Foxton School that graffiti had appeared on the youth shelter and in other areas of the Recreation Ground. As a result of her investigation, it was determined that it was done by two children not at Foxton School.”

Dr Oakley proposed that, with this amendment, the Minutes of the previous Meeting, held on 7th November 2011, should be signed as a true record. Mr Sutton seconded the proposal and all were agreed.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT

Dr van de Ven reported as follows:

1. Upon request, County Highways Department had jetted the surface water drains in Fowlmere Rd and the connecting first section of the High Street to Vicarage Corner. This was, in any case, regular occurrence, but a specific concern about a

drainage chamber (near the junction of the two roads, which connects to the watercourse behind Mortimer's Lane) was investigated and indeed found to be blocked and would now be unblocked.

2. The Highways Department would also resurface part of the A10 footway between Foxton Bottom and Fowlmere Road, Shepreth, and cut back some of the overhanging foliage.

3. An award of £5,720 from Cambridgeshire County Council's Transformation Fund had been made to Melbourn Area Youth Development for administrative support. This would enable professional coordination of the new volunteer network and provide a focus on funding applications. In awarding the grant, recognition was made of the commitment of five parishes – Foxton, Fowlmere, Meldreth, Shepreth and Melbourn – to pool resources and work together. Also noted was the strength of the volunteer network now in place, including drivers from Royston and District Community Transport now providing lifts to Tuesday evening youth club.

4. The first new 50mph sign on the A10 from Royston to Cambridge, near Frog End/Dunsbridge Turnpike, would be changed to a reflective yellow-backed sign to highlight the beginning of a lower speed limit zone.

5. First Capital Connect (FCC) had agreed to the Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Rail User Group's argument that parking charges at Meldreth and Shepreth Stations should be lowered. The current charge of £3 would be dropped to £1.50 at Meldreth, and at Shepreth parking charges had been abolished, all to take effect on 1st January 2012. These station car parks already had the lowest charges on the FCC line so this was a very genuine gesture.

6. Dr van de Ven said she had had a two-hour meeting with the signalling engineer responsible for the Foxton level crossing. He explained in meticulous detail the connection between the mechanical operation of the level crossing's vehicular barrier system and the signalling that regulates the movement of trains toward Foxton. While traffic queuing on the level crossing was unnerving, it did not put drivers at risk of being struck by a train, because until the barriers are down and in a locked position, signals allowing trains to proceed toward Foxton were not activated. A new, much more powerful, set of flashing lights had been installed at the level crossing in the hope of alerting drivers further from the crossing.

Dr van de Ven reported that some commuters would join the Rail Users' Group and that the County Council was holding £258K for Cambridge Future Transport

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Mrs Roberts said that she had attended a Leader's Portfolio meeting at which grants were reviewed and at which she had supported the grant for improvements to the Play Area on Foxton Recreation Ground. She was happy to report that a grant of £12,500 had been approved.

Mrs Roberts also reported that there had been a motion to cancel the increase in councillors' allowances in advance of the Review Panel's report.

Mrs Roberts had also attended a Planning Sub-Committee meeting when she had drawn attention to the fact that the situation regarding the former Q8 Garage at Foxton did not appear on the agenda even though months had passed since it had been

agreed that SCDC would submit an application itself for this site. The officer dealing with this matter, Mr Duthie, said it was not high on his list of priorities and Mrs Roberts recommended that the council send a strong letter to SCDC about the lack of action.

A lack of affordable housing was a worrying concern at the district council and the financial situation was such that only Bed and Breakfast accommodation was available to the homeless at present. There was a need to make progress with affordable housing schemes.

Dr Grindley said that he had been telephoned by Endurance Estates who would like to assist the parish council with a statutory Neighbourhood Plan. However, before embarking on such a plan, the Parish Plan would need to have been published. Dr Grindley also said that a small site on the High Street had been proposed for housing that could include an element of affordable homes.

Mr Barnes said that Tim Holmes of Endurance Estates had had meetings at the school and at 2 Station Road where he had extolled the benefits of its plans. He also reported that Amber Holmes had made the proposition that more high-cost homes at the Moore's farm site would alleviate drainage problems.

PARISH PLAN UPDATE

Mr Hockley had e-mailed a report as follows:

“Further to the information given in last month's Laurentian, we plan to distribute the summary and action plans to all households during February. Subject to confirmation next month, the meeting to present the full plan to parishioners is provisionally scheduled for Monday March 12th. At the same time as the summary and action plans are circulated we plan to make the full plan available on the village web site.

In addition to the above, we are considering, having due regard for the cost of production, the distribution list for the full plan. I am consulting Linda Browne (Community Liaison Support Assistant based at SCDC) but I am awaiting a reply. Input from the Parish Council is welcome and the final distribution list will be agreed with the Parish Council.”

Dr Oakley reported that the clerk had proof read the Parish Plan and had suggested amendments to standardise both the wording and formatting. He said he would liaise with the lead members of the Parish Plan group in incorporating these amendments.

There was also a short discussion about the timetable for publication of the plan.

REPORTS FROM THE WORKING PARTIES

RECREATION AND AMENITIES

Mr McCreery reported as follows:

1. Recreation Ground

i). Training Lights

A letter had been received from the Football Club regarding the floodlit training area. Whilst both they and Foxton Dynamos were grateful for the facility, they pointed out that the area covered by the lights was limited and meant overuse of the one area of ground. Extending the height of the lights would help significantly. Further thought was required on the most cost effective way forward.

ii). Ball Wall

Concern was also expressed about the wear in front of the ball wall. Again the group would look at possible solutions.

iii) Hard-standing Area

In response to his request, at the meeting held with the sports clubs, for ideas for the hard-standing area formerly used for netball, the Football Club had suggested that the area could be developed as a floodlit, multi-purpose all-weather facility. Mr McCreery said he would like to hear of other ideas for the use of this area. Any development would have to have regard for the costs involved and grant availability.

It was suggested that grants might be obtained through QEII and the Football Foundation. Mrs Roberts said that Fowlmere PC would be pleased to demonstrate its hard-standing facility.

iv) Play Area Improvement Group

As reported last month, the Grant Application to the AmeyCespa Community Fund had moved to stage 2. However, the Grant Application to South Cambridgeshire District Council had been successful for the full £12,500 applied for in August. Mr McCreery said he was sure all the council would like Mrs McFadzean to pass on its congratulations to the Play Area Improvement Group.

2. Grass

Two quotations had been received for the village's grass cutting requirements for the next three years. No response has yet been received from the other three contractors who were requested to quote. At present the best quotation was from the council's existing supplier.

3. Seating for the Bus Shelter

Delivery of the seat was still awaited but expected this month.

4. Foxton Woods

A meeting was held with Sarah Shephard from the County Council through County Councillor, Susan van de Ven's, good offices, and attended by Mrs Macintyre and Mr Barnes. Mr McCreery said that, unfortunately, owing to a plumbing emergency at home, he had been unable to attend himself. Although no funds were currently available, money would be available over the next 4 years and the priorities established were:

- Repairs to fencing particularly to the South East plantation

- Dog refuse bin at the end of Caxton Lane
- Removal of brambles on the border of the South West plantation

In addition, Ms Shephard had agreed to look into the ownership of the wood lying to the South West of the South West plantation.

5. QEII Registration

Mr McCreery said that Foxton Recreation Ground now appeared on the QEII Fields web site.

FINANCE

Mr Sutton gave details of the bank accounts as follows:

Deposit Account	£16,785.96
Current Account	£86.23
(This included a discount of £32.10 for delay in delivery from Shelterstore)	
Standard Life Bank	£30,344.92

Mr Sutton proposed the following cheques for payment:

Melbourn Area Youth Development (FPC contribution to the Melbourn Youth Club)	£300.00
D Salmons (Village Warden duties, November)	£127.50
Cambridgeshire County Council (annual rent for Dovecote/Meadow)	£50.00
Foxton Village Hall (hire of Meeting Room on 7/11 and Lounge on 22/11)	£22.75

Mr McCreery seconded the proposal and all were agreed that these payments, totalling £500.25, should be made and that £470 should be transferred from the Deposit Account to the Current Account.

Mr Sutton said he was investigating why the council was charged more sometimes than others for the hire of the Lounge. He also raised the question of the timetable for submitting the council's precept request for 2012/13. The clerk was asked to find out the date by which the submission was required.

PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

Dr Grindley reported as follows:

Planning Committee Meeting 22 November 2011

The committee considered the following application:

Mrs Christa Crowther	Application S/2107/11 to convert a double garage into a living area, bathroom and utility room at 5 Hardman Road.
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It was proposed that the utility room would be part of the main house, while the living area and bathroom would be a separate living space, accessible through French windows at the rear.

Although the external elevations would be in keeping with the area, the committee's decision was to make no recommendation, but to note the following:

- i) Although the application was for a living space separate to the rest of the house, this space would not contain all necessary facilities to make the space entirely separate, such as a kitchen area.
- ii) Access to the new living area would be along the right hand side of the house, then across the back of the existing house, and through a set of French windows.
- iii) The possible addition of an extra car, and the loss of the garage, may result in the road being used for parking to avoid potentially awkward car parking arrangements on the drive (which is only wide enough for two cars). This road is a busy road at certain times of the day (at school drop-off or pick-up time, and when the Village Hall is used in the evenings).
- iv) The conversion would result in a 5-bedroom house, with no ground floor storage space.

Planning Committee meeting 29 November 2011

The meeting opened with the unanimous election of Liam Elliott as Committee Secretary.

The following application, for a decision by the full parish council, was given initial scrutiny by the committee:

Mr Alan Dossett	Application S/1797/11 to convert an existing dwelling into eco-offices at 6 Cambridge Road
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Two previous applications had been received for this site. The first, in 2008 (for conversion of a dwelling to an eco-dwelling) had been recommended for acceptance by the District Council, and a further application in 2010 (very similar to this new application) had been rejected on the following grounds:

- i) The application contravened the previous permission, which would keep the building as a dwelling and not involve change of use.
- ii) It was felt that the access and servicing was inadequate for the amount of office space.
- iii) Not enough parking was proposed.

Although the new plans showed that the amount of parking space had been increased slightly, it was felt that this application was very similar to the previous one. In addition, it was not clear from the plans exactly what was now proposed on the site as a whole – the plans showed redevelopment of the entire site, although the application site itself only appeared to be a part of this.

The committee felt unable to make a recommendation, and access for a site visit had been arranged for next Thursday morning by Carl Dodd at Property Revolutions Ltd.

Dr Grindley said that the committee recommended that a decision be deferred until the site visit has been made. This was agreed by council.

Responses to consultation documents

- Housing Strategy consultation (South Cambs District Council)
- Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (Communities & Local Government)
- Community Infrastructure Levy (Communities & Local Government)

Mr Elliott agreed to return on-line versions of these documents, as determined by the committee.

CPALC meeting 22 November 2011 held at Impington

Localism Act. (Steve Vartoukian CCC) Key advice summary

Received Royal assent 15 November 2011.

Open services legislature. Councils to provide for right to challenge - re delivery of services (voluntary groups, community groups, parish councils, Local Authority (LA) employees). Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) & South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) need to run a procurement process and assess capability of organisations. Although the private sector doesn't appear on the list, under the procurement process, anyone can bid. Many parish councils have been working on what services they wish to bid for.

Challenge for CCC - Services used by families with complex needs - how to reduce the cost.

Deficit reduction strategy. Increasing global austerity. Public sector/LA budget reductions. Cumulative £540m CCC.

Challenges - End of public sector growth curve; pressure on resources- reverting back to pre 1997 expenditure levels.

Planning. - Major changes here:

- Neighbourhood plans - Communities decide outline or full planning applications
- Infrastructure levy - Allows for some of the moneys received to be spent on items other than infrastructure
- Parish councils - more involvement in decision making; opportunities to take on additional services; involvement in community planning
- CPALC committee involvement - decided to have quarterly meetings for South Cambridgeshire parish councils to exchange views and receive advice

Some Councillors and Clerks present were critical of CCC attempts at consultation, particularly involving highway matters.

CPALC meeting 3 Dec 2011 (Bluntisham)

Localism Act. (John Findlay -CEO - NALC.) Key advice summary:

Community Assets & Right to challenge. Parish councils can bid to have public land and property assets deemed local community assets.

Codes of Conduct. Standards Board going. All councils should have a code of conduct, otherwise the code of conduct of the principal Authority will apply.

All councils must have a responsible officer, independent of the council (ie. not a councillor).

Planning - Major changes:

- Regional Planning disappears

- National infrastructure matters will be dealt with by Central Government; and District Council local plans continue
- Parish councils become planning authorities, and can determine planning applications, but not if they own the land.
- District Council prepares its local area plan
- Parish councils can prepare a Neighbourhood Plan to conform to District Council core strategies - when approved by the local community via a referendum the Neighbourhood Plan has statutory status.
- Parish councils can't appeal against the District Council decisions - NALC seeking to change the legislation to give PC's a right of appeal
- Obligation rests with the District Council to pay for the referendum and also to provide advice to a parish council in the preparation of statutory Neighbourhood Plans
- Community Neighbourhood Plans are community led/developer plans, which, when prepared, do not have statutory status.
- NALC will produce electronic bulletins on Neighbourhood Plans. The organization is also hoping to produce a training package if funds are allocated by central Government.
- Infrastructure Levy. - At present housing infrastructure levy is set at £85 per square metre, but with no link to parish councils. In future the levy will be distributed to County Councils, District Councils, and Parish Councils receiving 5 to 10%
- Community Budgets. New devolutionary framework will involve devolved funding (with no details as yet)

Dr Grindley said that other parish councils had been working hard on the implications of the Localism Bill and that it was important that Foxton develop a Neighbourhood Plan as soon as possible although the Parish Plan would have to be published first.

POLICE LIAISON REPORT

Mr Barnes reported three incidents in Foxton since the last FPC meeting:

- A burglary in St Laurence Road
- Anti-social behaviour in Edis Way
- An incident of violent crime in Illingworth Way

The police were continuing to check on parking in Hall Close. Mr Barnes said that BT had now secured all the inspection covers between Foxton and Harston against metal thieves.

RECREATION GROUND TRUST REPORT

Mr Bore said that work on the showers had been completed and the racks installed. Unfortunately, there was still a small degree of “puddling” in the showers, but it was not a major problem although it could lead to lime scale deposits. A drain in the sports pavilion had needed to be unblocked.

Mr Sutton pointed out that the changing rooms were left unlocked when the pavilion was in use – anyone could walk in. It was agreed that this was a matter for the sports clubs to deal with.

Dr Oakley said he would be holding a very brief meeting for the Trustees to approve the accounts after the present meeting.

DOVECOTE/MEADOW REPORT

There was nothing to report.

CORRESPONDENCE

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

- 1) Letter dated 21st November from the SCDC Waste, Recycling & Minimisation Officer re Christmas waste and recycling collections enclosing a poster (displayed) and an information leaflet.
- 2) Letter dated 21st November from Veolia Water Central Ltd re the public consultation now open on its Draft Drought Management Plan 2011. The plan is available to view on its website (www.veoliawater.co.uk/droughtplanconsultation). Responses invited in writing or via e-mail by 16th January 2012.
- 3) Letter dated 23rd November from Brian Stinton, CCC Area manager – Traffic City and South, inviting proposals from community groups who wish to submit a bid for funding for Local Minor Highway Improvements: application form enclosed, which should be returned before 30th December 2011. *Passed to N.O.*
- 4) Letter dated 29th November from the Peter Gaskin, CCC Rights of Way & Access Officer, enclosing a map showing two areas of land through which public footpaths 1 and 3 run and where problems of access are recurring. Mr Gaskin asks for information regarding the ownership of these areas of land
- 5) South Cambs magazine Winter 2011.
- 6) Local Council Review, Winter 2011.

VISITORS' QUESTIONS

Mr Howard had earlier sent an e-mail to the chairman and to Dr van de Ven concerning the proposed extension of double yellow lines in Station Road rehearsing the parking problems in Station Road and the High Street, but supporting, as a first step, the extension of the double yellow lines in Station Road. Mr Howard also supported the floodlighting of the hard-standing area on the Recreation Ground.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no further business.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was confirmed that the next meeting would be held on **Monday, 9th January 2012** at **7.45pm** in the **Meeting Room** of the **Village Hall**.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.12pm.