

ICKLETON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 15 December 2010 at 7.30 pm in the Meeting Room, Ickleton Village Hall.

Present: Terry Sadler (Chairman), Jane Hurst, Lewis Duke, Peter Wombwell, Liz Gibson, Sheila Birch, Tim Pavelin, Liz Goddard, Jocelyn Flitton (Parish Clerk), Cllr Tim Stone (County) and Cllr John Williams (District). Alexander Creed – Strutt Parker and Richard Grist – Low Carbon Solar

210/10 Apologies for absence: None

211/10 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2010: Under 208/10 the fifth sentence should read ‘The land between Grassy Lane and the River Cam in Hinxton parish was discussed.....’ Following this amendment the minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

212/10 Adjournment for questions from members of the public: None

The Chairman brought the next item forward on the Agenda.

225/10 Proposed installation of solar panels in fields: Lewis Duke and Peter Wombwell declared an interest. Lewis Duke introduced Mr Creed and Mr Grist to the meeting and gave an overview of the project following the distribution of a map to all councillors and a site/field visit by some councillors on Sunday. It is proposed to hold a public consultation (drop-in style) in the New Year; this will be followed by two planning applications. The timetable will be tight because the projects have to be completed by April 2012. The electricity will be fed into the existing power lines that run through or near the fields, then into the EDF grid providing the substation can handle it – this is as yet unknown. At each site the solar panels will occupy an area exceeding 20 acres. The shape the panels will take has not yet been finalised. It may be possible to let sheep graze on the sites, or to have wildlife strips. The panels are supported by metal stakes that are not be cemented in and no chemicals are involved. The panels are guaranteed for 25 years. The panels will be fenced in to deter vandalism. There will also be a need for inverter buildings – three per site. The sites will take approximately six weeks to build (depending on EDF); the panels and other materials will be delivered by lorry. The Chairman said at this point he felt we should keep an open mind and invited the Councillors to ask questions to either Mr Creed or Mr Grist. At the close of the discussion, Mr Creed and Mr Grist left the meeting.

Cllr John Williams joined the meeting.

213/10 Matters Arising:

028/07 Tennis Courts – The Clerk had still not received a reply from the Valuation Office. We had been advised of those still interested in the village to have tennis courts. It was felt essential to move this forward. The Clerk will send out a list of those interested and Lewis Duke volunteered, together with Liz Goddard and Terry Sadler, to speak to those interested and report back to the next meeting.

Action: LD/LG/TS/Clerk

094/10 Grass cutting protected grass verges – Due to personal circumstances, this item is still outstanding with Peter Wombwell.

Action: PW

143/10 CCC re. Signage for Allotments – The Clerk had sent an e-mail to David Lines (CCC) on 6 December 2010 requesting an update as to when we could expect the signage. No response had been received.

Action: Clerk

202/10 Dog Fouling – A mention had been placed in the Icene and no further comments had been received.

Check on village seats – Peter Wombwell had carried out a survey. The seat in Duxford Road was in poor condition and it was felt not used. This seat may be removed, but any parts that may be useful will be kept. The seat in front of Coploe Pit (which is well used) was in need of repair. All the seats, especially the one on Cemetery corner, are in need of timber treating. The Clerk will obtain a quotation for the work from C Frankau.

Action: Clerk

204/10 Repair of seat in Recreation Ground – this had been done.

208/10 Wellcome Trust EBI plans & Hinxtton PC – the Clerk had asked the Hinxtton Parish Clerk to notify us when the EBI planning application is received. **Action: Clerk**

214/10 Youth Representation: None

215/10 Reports from District and County Councillors:

Appendix I - District Councillor

Appendix II - County Councillor

The Chairman moved the following item forward on the Agenda.

226/10 Winter Service re. Gritting of roads - A letter had been received from CCC dated 01/12/10 regarding Winter Service and the Localism Agenda – Opportunities for Third-Party Working. Lewis Duke was disappointed following an article in Cambridge News (16/11/10) with the headline ‘Farmers poised to help in winter roads crisis’. In fact the offer of help from Ickleton farmers had not been taken up. The Clerk had notified CCC (23/09/10) of the names of the two farmers in our village who were willing to help and had storage facilities for salt. Nothing had been heard from CCC. During the recent bad weather, accidents had happened on the road between Ickleton and Elmdon. Cllr Stone said he would take back our complaint. **Action: Cllr Stone**

216/10 Correspondence received:

SCDC (Sally Smart)	-	Local Government Finance Act 1992 – Parish Precepts
SCDC (Jo Mills)	-	South Cambs Village Services & Facilities Study
SCDC (Andrea Buckley)	-	Guidance on Rural Affordable House & Dev. Exception site
SCDC (Holly Adams)	-	Future of Standards
SCDC (Rob Mungovan)	-	Free Training Seminar – Creating Orchards 05/12/10
CCC (A Greenwood)	-	On line planning complaints form
CCC (Mark Lloyd)	-	Decisions providing services for local communities in future
CCC (Mark Lloyd)	-	County’s Plans & Budget 2011/12
CCC (Kate Day)	-	P3 Parish Paths & Future Partnerships
CCC (Mike Cooper)	-	Flooding - Mill Lane/Church Street/Network Rail & Back Lane
CCC	-	Sawston & Linton Locality News
Richard Herbert	-	Parish Online website information
Neil McKillen	-	Planning Portal website information
PlayQuest	-	Request to maintain Play Area
Andrew Lansley CBE MP	-	Stansted Airport
Stop Stansted Expansion	-	Member Letter November 2010
CPALC	-	County Guidance/Newsletter 23/11/10/AGM draft minutes
Various e-mails	-	Circulated to Councillors during month
Journal of Local Planning	-	Requesting subscription
Aon Ltd	-	Charity & Voluntary Org. Insurance
Essex CC (B Kendall)	-	Minerals Development Document: Preferred Approach
NALC	-	Section 137 Expenditure: Limit for 2011/12 & LCR OnLine
Rural Services Network	-	Parish News 02/12/10
Cambs. Acre	-	News Digest 01/12/10/Digital TV Switchover Project
	-	Community Action – Winter 2010
HM Revenue & Customs	-	PAYE end of year reminder
Came & Co.	-	To grit or not to grit
CPRE	-	Magazine Autumn 2010 & Fieldwork December 2010
Luminus	-	Magazines
Matta Products	-	Rejuvenate your Playground
SMP Playgrounds	-	Leaflet
Glasdon	-	Catalogue for Local Councils

A resolution to authorise the Clerk to incur expenditure on repairs and maintenance up to £200 per item exc. VAT. The Chairman proposed the above resolution subject to the Clerk obtaining the prior approval of the Chairman or Vice-Chairman. The resolution was adopted with one vote against.

Bank Balances:

Community Account	-	£690.11
Business Base Rate Tracker Account	-	£18,843.88 (£5,500 transferred to Community a/c)

Precept discussions: The Finance Committee need to meet before the next Parish Council meeting in January to discuss the precept for 2011/12. The deadline for submitting the precept is 2 February 2011. The Clerk will arrange the date for the Finance Committee to meet. **Action: Clerk**

220/10 Recreation Field and Play Area

Aerial Runway – seat – not known if the height of the seat has been checked. **Action: PW**
Skate park – painting – C Frankau had been unable to complete this due to the bad weather. **Action: Clerk**

221/10 Cemetery - Chapel – Condition to be kept under Review

Repair of roof by Regal Roofing – this is still outstanding. **Action: Clerk**
Response from SCDC – Conservation & Design Manager – A response to our letter had been received. The contents of which were noted.

222/10 Churchyard Wall: Quotation for repair by A Hoare – the Clerk will chase this. **Action: Clerk**
Quinquennial Inspection Report:

Obtain quotations for Tree works in the New Year – the Clerk will obtain 3 quotations for cut down the Cherry tree and to prune the Yew hedge hopefully exposing the headstone that is currently hidden.

Action: Clerk

Jonas Memorial – the Clerk will ask for a response to the letter sent on 27 October 2010. **Action: Clerk**

223/10 Flooding:

Land adj. Stumps Cross – The Chairman had drafted a letter to Gt Chesterford and will ask the Vice-Chairman to check. Lewis Duke will contact Clive Onslow (SEEARO) to set up another site visit and to see if the completion date is known. **Action: TS/LD**

Drain top of Mill Lane – Mike Cooper (CCC) had met with Network Rail and they have promised to carry out the work within the next 20 weeks. **Action: Clerk**

Abbey Street opp. Methodist Chapel – nothing further to report. **Action: LD**

Grange Road Mr Cope/Lewis Duke – the Clerk noticed that the drain hole had been dug out. The item to be taken off the Agenda.

224/10 Street Lighting Maintenance & Energy April 2011 onwards – To be discussed next month.

Action: Clerk

227/10 South Cambs Art Awards 2011 – The Councillors were asked to think and consider various individuals or organisations within the village. An item will be put in Icene and on next month's Agenda.

Action: Clerk

228/10 Date and time of next meeting: 19 January 2011 @ 7.30 pm

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.10pm

Chairman

Date

Appendix 1

District Councillor's Report

1. A piece of good news - if you think it's good. I have responded to the County Highways consultation on speed limits on the A.1301 and A.505 and among other things recommended that the stretch of the A.1301 between the BP roundabout and Stumps Cross have a 50 mph limit. Surprisingly the Department is in agreement.

They are also proposing 50 mph on the Sawston bypass section. I have not commented on this yet, and wonder if it is a good idea or not. The cycle route from Whittlesford to Sawston has become a proper cycle path, and I believe it will have a designated crossing over the bypass, and this may have a bearing.

2. The District Council has a new chief executive and as part of her self-instruction she has been taking a look round the territory village by village and I showed her what Ickleton and Duxford are like a few weeks ago. This is probably the first time such an initiative has happened.

Appendix II

County Councillor's Report

Report to Ickleton Parish Council

15th December 2010

Bus subsidies

As the County gets into budget setting it is trying desperately to save services to vulnerable members of society. Everything else is being questioned.

One area being examined is expenditure on bus subsidies. We have no indication at present whether the administration intends to reduce subsidies or eliminate them altogether. But it's worth looking at the local picture to prepare us for what might happen. The Tuesday 101 gets a subsidy of £4,482.50, net £2,865.13, as on this route the County collects the fares. Apparently, unlike the Saffron Walden Citi 7, this route gets no subsidy from Essex County Council. Essex subsidises the 132.

The 20% cut in the Bus Service Operators Grant may jeopardize the commercial viability of some marginal routes, which may exacerbate problems of rural isolation and poverty in Cambridgeshire. The County has yet to discuss the impact of this with bus operators.

Once we have a better indication of the administration's thoughts I would like to convene a meeting of parish councils with the County and bus operators to see what are the options.

Streetlights

The County Council has now written to parishes about ex District Council streetlights. What they have failed to do is give an indication of the price of maintenance. I raised this in Full Council last Tuesday but clearly the Cabinet member responsible hadn't a clue.

Talking to officers on the subject, it seems that the question is quite complicated. First of all the maintenance rules have changed and now has to include structural testing (remember tombstone topple meters?). Also the County says its own maintenance charges are based on the County's marginal cost. So any outside contractor is almost certain to be more expensive.

It is unlikely that a definite set of figures will be available until March or April 2011. Meanwhile a meeting took place this week with Balfour Beatty in London and I did ask that the predicament of parish councils be brought to their attention

Parish Precepts

Parishes have received a communication from the County's Chief Executive in which he drops a fairly heavy hint that parishes might like to take the opportunity to increase precepts to give them the opportunity to replace some of the County's spending. It is thought that the Localism Bill will still allow parishes to

increase precepts without having to go to referendum. In future years they may not have the same flexibility. Some parishes are apparently considering setting up a specific fund to allow them to implement some of the wish lists contained in parish plans.

Traffic Regulation Orders

Parishes are aware that the major cost of changing speed limits or creating white lines is in the regulations surrounding publishing Traffic Regulation Orders in local newspapers. I thought that publishing on the County website combined with affected parishes posting details on parish noticeboards would achieve the same result at a much lower cost.

I now discover that Cambridgeshire is already lobbying with other authorities for a change in rules, though as yet their deliberations have not produced a firm proposal. One difficulty is that there is expected to be no space for a parliamentary bill before 2012 at the earliest.

This could well be of interest to parish councils because as things stand it is highly likely that there will be a further reduction in the budget for Cambridgeshire Highways. The burden of financing road improvements is likely to fall increasingly on parish councils.

The Localism Bill and so on

The Localism bill has now been published and the County and District Councils are going through the small print to discover exactly what money they will be getting and what they can do with it. The government has tried to put a positive gloss on the cuts by measuring the total amount, which authorities had to spend and compare that with the amount they will have next year. That means that they start with this year's council tax as a given. So while the headline amount the government gives Cambridgeshire is reduced by something over 7% the government claims the real reduction in spending power is only just over 3%. This ignores the effect of an ageing population and inflation. At first blush the County thinks that its prediction of a drop in real spending power next year is in the order of £16 million, which is the figure on which current budget plans are based.

The Community Infrastructure Levy and the New Homes Bonus may have some effect in a fast growing county like Cambridgeshire. At least it would be fast growing if anyone built houses to satisfy demand. The County is concerned that the New Homes Bonus is expected to be divided 80% to District Councils and 20% to County Councils. This is raising hackles because it is road infrastructure, schools and so on, which cost a lot of money. Collecting waste and planning by contrast costs much less. The County's concerns are that money will be spent on "nice to have" things rather than essential things.

It is likely that the County will propose that rather than set councils against each other, the better way would be to decide what is needed locally – and that would include input from parish councils – and then spend the money accordingly.

It is also a bit odd that the electorate is filling the blogosphere with negative feedback, when only seven months ago they predominantly elected Conservatives who made no secret of wanting to implement The Big Society.

Speed Limit Changes

John Williams has already informed you of the County's proposals to change speed limits on the A1301.