

Minutes of the meeting of Fen Ditton Parish Council held on 2nd January, 2018 at 7.30 p.m. in the Recreation ground Pavilion

Present: Cllrs. Bush; Collett; Conroy; Easterfield; Farrah (Chairman); Jones; Sues;

In attendance: Cty.Cllr Bradnam; Dist Cllr Turner

2017/163 To receive apologies

Apologies were received from the clerk. In her absence Cllr. Easterfield took the minutes.

2017/164 Open Forum for members of the public

No members of the public were in attendance

2017/165 To approve the Minutes of the Monthly meeting held on 5th December 2017

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5th December were approved

2017/166 To receive declarations from Councillors as to the disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary in relation to any agenda item

No declarations were made

2017/167 Clerk's report and matters arising

- i. Cemetery extension – see 2017/174. The clerk to apply for a Tree Planning order now, so work is not delayed.
- ii. Noticeboards – the carving is complete and it is hoped the board will be in place by the end of the month
- iii. New lamp post by the memorial – this is now working
- iv. Waddelows – the hedges have been taken back
- v. Fen Ditton Cycle Path – this work has now been delayed until the summer

2017/168 To approve payments made during the month and accounts for payment

The following were approved for payment.

	Cheq. No	Amnt
British Telecommunications	DD	32.10
e.on	DD	19.32
Hayden Woodruff – bus shelter cleaning	101498	15.00
ACRE - payroll	101501	41.40
Scotsdales – Christmas tree	101502	149.99
Sarah Smart – December salary	101503	544.27

The payment to CGM for £2394.00 was withheld pending clarification

2017/169 To note money received

None

2017/170 To receive report from Cllr. Bradman

See appendix 1. In addition: There is a consultation starting on 5th January on the Local Plan Modifications running for 6 weeks. The consultation is only on the modifications to the plan, not the plan itself.

2017/171 To receive report from Cllr. Turner

No report given

2017/172 To consider following planning applications and tree works

S/4247/17/AD 699 Newmarket Road Volvo shield sign x 2; 5.5 meter Volvo totem x 1
No comment

2017/173 Planning responses

Approved:

S/3177/17/FL Farm View, High Ditch Road Single storey rear extension

S/3123/17/FL The Plough, Green End Erection of one storey pergola. Fixed structure with glazing to front and open sides, back attached to building. Retractable cream PVC canopy roof with motorised unit.

2017/174 To consider and agree proposals for work to increase cemetery provision

The proposal (attached) was agreed with one amendment: the cost of a cemetery plot be increased to mitigate the cost of the works. It was agreed that the expenditure be put into the 2018 budget.

2017/175 To consider grant application

The grant application of £50 for the Fen Ditton Baby and Toddler group was approved. The council wished to extend its thanks to the organisers for the valuable work that they do.

2017/176 To note and comment as appropriate on the amendment to proposal PRO413 in High Ditch Road

The Highways Officer proposed two amendments: to reduce the distance on the corner by 5m to 35m, and to reduce the distance outside Mulberry House by 5m to 15m. The council supports the minimum length that the Highways Officer recommends and the amendments were agreed.

2017/177 To co-opt a councillor

No applications received

2017/178 To receive correspondence

None received

2017/179 To accept notices and matters for the next agenda

None

Chairman..... Date.....

The meeting ended at 8:45 pm.

Appendix 1 - County Councillor's Report for Parishes - January 2018

Cambridgeshire County Council aims to make savings in 2018-19 of £35 million on top of the £215 million saved since 2011. The ruling group have asked the Officers to deliver services more cheaply, without having an impact on those services. Such changes are delivered under the umbrella of 'Transformation' and 'doing things differently'. It is probable that some improvements can be made but essentially this is bound to mean fewer services. I fear the comfortably off will survive but those least able to cope will suffer the most. Since the leading party at the County Council has repeatedly decided to keep our income from local taxation as low as possible in recent years, Cambridgeshire is now just about the worst funded County Council in the country and consequently provides probably the worst services.

Some mitigation of the worst impacts could be achieved by raising the council tax by the maximum permitted amount. At present the ruling group is proposing to raise council tax for 2018/19 by the permitted 2% for adult social services but not by the extra 2% for other services. The government has now raised the cap for other services to 3%. We wait to see how the ruling group will respond. Even an extra 2% would not go very far in solving the council's funding problems but it would at least provide just over £5 million extra to invest in roads, libraries and children's services, for example, and give a higher tax-base for the future. If the option of the extra 2% had been taken since 2015-16, the County Council's income would by now be over £15 million higher and this would rise to £21 million by 2018-19, still not enough to prevent service reductions but at least it would help to mitigate the worst effects.

We have already been through a consultation seeking to make savings of £900,000 in Children's Services. Despite strong opposition in debate and a Lib Dem petition signed by 4,000 residents, the County Council voted through funding cuts to Children's Centres across Cambridgeshire. This means there will be fewer services in some Centres and other Centres will close or be re-located. These Centres offer crucial services for children's development and vital support for parents. It is proposed that these services will be replaced by outreach but we fear these savings will simply store up problems for the future.

Street lighting – windfall will not be spent on street lighting

Under Balfour Beatty's Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract for street lighting, there have been deductions for unsatisfactory performance and there is a forecast underspend of £384,000 in the budget for 2017/18 because fewer lights have been lit than agreed under the contract and because of a lack of repairs and inspection. Opposition councillors asked for this to be spent on replacing some of the lights that have been removed but the leading party refused.

Cambridge Underground? You may have seen articles in the local press about the Cambridge Metro. The Mayor fought his election in 2017 on the basis of light rail for Cambridge and only recently and reluctantly agreed with the Greater Cambridge Partnership to have the principle of a mass transit system independently evaluated. The consultants' report is due to be published in the New Year but James Palmer revealed a late draft of the report ahead of time, which is why the press picked up the story.

The reason for the Mayor's breach of protocol, is that the report indicates that light rail might not be the best solution, so I can only assume he was making his excuses early. The preferred option is an electrically-powered vehicle which can run on the road, effectively an electric bus, small enough to go through underground tunnels. These tunnels may link west Cambridge to the east end of Mill Road and the centre to the P&R sites but there is no indication of where a central underground station might be built as yet. There will be many steps along the way before this or any similar concept is agreed. For the time being the main concerns is how it would be funded.

Waterbeach New Town Supplementary Planning Document - Joint Parishes Meeting. At our meeting on 21 December, we had a useful question and answer session on the main issues, acknowledging that little can be done until the Local Plan has been agreed, the A10 Corridor Study has reported and we know the Mayor's intentions for funding. Paul Mumford is moving from SCDC to a new job and Katie Parry is taking maternity leave – so we welcomed Michael Huntington who will work with Andrew Winter and Mott Macdonald to bring forward the SPD. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 7 February 2018.

Litter picking on the Cam towpath – I am trying to arrange meetings with the Conservators of the Cam to discuss a proper Agreement with the SCDC/City Shared Waste Service and for collection of the rubbish.

Cambridge North Station – the Joint Development Control Committee (JDCC) objected to Brookgate's initial proposal for the Office Block to be hard up against the edge of the existing approved cycle path, which crosses Station Square down to Moss Bank. This clever arrangement (not!) would have seen pedestrians exiting the building straight into the path of cyclists. I am pleased to report that Brookgate returned to the JDCC in December with a proposal to shift the whole office block back from the edge of the curtilage and slightly further north, which should provide a 2m corridor between the cycle path and the office doors. This is a significant improvement.

Following public consultation, the JDCC has also seen presentations of the proposed 'Wing' development between Newmarket Road and High Ditch Road and another on land north of Cherry Hinton village and Marshalls Airport.

Gritting – residents commuting via Cambridge North Station down through Moss Bank have fallen off their bikes on ice in the recent cold weather. I have been trying to find out which authority might be responsible for gritting the Cycle/footpath. This has proved to be complicated, as it turns out that some pedestrian routes are gritted voluntarily, which I think is currently the case for the Jane Coston Bridge, although we'd like to get this done formally.

Rail – Fen Road Chesterton Level Crossing – I remain concerned about the length of time for which the barriers are down since Cambridge North Station opened. I am working with Officers to discuss with Network Rail the Risk Assessments which require generous time allowances for down-time at the crossing and if these can be adjusted at all. I am also seeking last minute re-consideration of the land in different ownership south of the crossing, to seek any possibilities for achieving a pedestrian exit from Fen Road down to the Rive towpath, when the barriers are down. This is terribly complicated because there are multiple landowners but I feel something must be done to avoid trapping some 500 residents and 50 employees on the wrong side of the crossing for long periods of time.

Waterbeach – Now that the developers have started to build the footpath along the north side of Bannold Road, it is obvious that they haven't had any discussions with Balfour Beatty about moving the street lamps first. So now there are lamp posts in the middle of the footpath. I have raised this with Officers but it is not clear to me how or if they intend to enforce the approved drawings which show the street lamps at the back edge of the footpath.

Milton – Ely Road Bus Stop - I am seeking a meeting with Jon Finney to agree the location.

Landbeach and Horningsea - no particular requests. Landbeach had asked when the A10 Corridor Study Report would be published. We hope for an update at the JP Meeting on 7 February 2018.

Fen Ditton - I have met with the parish council and with residents to discuss the proposed parking restriction order on High Ditch Road. This proposal is associated with the changes required for the new cycle path and is attempting to make High Ditch Road safer. I was asked to raise the replacement of the 'gate' and 'Fen Ditton Please drive slowly' sign on High Ditch Road with County Highways Officer. I note that the Clerk has raised this and seems to have progressed the matter.

Appendix 2

Minute 2017/174 Proposal for works to increase cemetery provision

The Cemetery has a very limited number free plots remaining. Of these, about 40% are currently inaccessible, and at the current rate that new plots are taken up the remainder will be exhausted within 3-4 years. Although investigation is underway on extending the cemetery, this is likely to be a protracted process. This proposal suggests works to free up the 40%, giving an extra 2-3 years to implement an extension, making it less likely that the cemetery becomes full in the meantime.

The Cemetery currently has roughly 43 nominally available adult plots of which 10 are reserved. Of the remaining 33, 14 are actually inaccessible. New plots are currently being taken up at roughly 4-5 per year, so the 19 accessible ones will be exhausted in 3-4 years.



The inaccessible plots run along the North side of the cemetery at the Eastern end, and until this year most of them were nominally reserved by the MoD, a constraint that has now been removed. The plots are inaccessible because the digger cannot squeeze in between the railings and the plots on the next row, and because trees have self-seeded and get in the way.

The proposal comprises:

Modifying the railings so that each length is released from its end posts and then re-attached with nuts and bolts so that it can be removed for access by the digger

Removing entirely the three trees (two Hawthorne and an Elder) following the necessary application to South Cambridgeshire District Council

Removing the tree stumps and roots

Levelling the ground so that it is suitable for interment

Currently the railings are set in concrete, so the work would involve cutting the railings away at the bottom, welding on a new bottom bar, and then cutting the section out from the post, attaching brackets, and bolting it back top and bottom at each end.

The quotes and estimates for this work come out as follows (all prices EX VAT):

To make 9 railings removable as described: £115/section (this was a quote for 6 sections, I am assuming 9 will come in at the same price). For 9 railings @ £115: £1035 [Mowell & Co]

To reduce the trees to ground level £320 [TH Tree Surgery Ltd]

To remove roots and flatten ground: I don't have a formal estimate from Kevin, but say 2 days at £200/day: £400

Apply for a tree planning order: in the past a TPO has had zero cost

This comes to a total of £1755 ex VAT.

I propose that we accept these quotations and undertake the work sometime in the Spring. Ideally the tree removal and railing work would be done in parallel, as the two are tightly coupled. I would also suggest that we explore planting replacement trees somewhere viable within the cemetery boundary, or within the Recreation Ground in the vicinity of the cemetery.