

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FOXTON PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY, 9th JANUARY 2006, AT 7.45 p.m.

PRESENT

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

County Councillor David McCraith

District Councillor Deborah Roberts

IN ATTENDANCE

15 members of the public

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr Chilton

Mr Pusey welcomed all to the meeting.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Mr Brooksbank said he had been carded about the Burlington Press application (to be considered under Planning) and Miss Thake, who had relatives working at Cemex (also Planning).

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

There were three errors in the figures given in the Finance Committee report:

- (i) The balance in the Cambridge Building Society Account should have been given as £8300.05 (*not £83000.05*)
- (ii) The figure for Mr Mead's earnings in November should have given as £57.72 (*not £57.22*)
- (iii) The total for the cheques required should have been given as £483.05 (*not £482.55*)

Mr Brooksbank proposed that, with these amendments, the Minutes of the previous meeting, held on Monday, 5th December 2005, should be signed as a true record. Mr Hockley seconded the proposal and all were agreed.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

The Old School Site

He clerk said that the council's letter about its wish to see low cost housing on this site had been acknowledged but a substantive reply had not been received. Mr Pusey said that the County Council was willing to work with a Housing Association on this site.

Puddles in the Village

Mr Hockley said that, following his meeting with Mr Cooper, he had received an e-mail from him saying that repairs were not likely to begin for some time.

Trading Status of the Garage on the A10 at Foxton

Mrs Roberts said she had been told that this matter was unlikely to be a matter for the District Council but said she would try to find out who would deal with such things.

Defective Lights at the Community Building

Mr McCraith said he had spoken to Gerald Browning (CCC) and said that outstanding issues really must be dealt with. Bill Tarling (also CCC) had apparently been in touch with Mills and Douglas but Mr McCraith said he would remain “on the case”.

Survey of Care Needs in the Village

Eighty-six replies had been received to the survey distributed to 218 individuals in the village, and these showed that there was clearly a small need for services for the elderly. The clerk had received a letter from Dr John Heap, Chairman of the Harston and District Village Warden Trust a few days before the present meeting offering to include Foxton in this scheme. It was felt that this would need to be looked at carefully between now and the next FPC meeting.

REPORTS FROM THE COMMITTEES

RECREATION AND AMENITIES

Mr Pusey reported on Mr Chilton’s behalf as follows:

1. Hedge at Vicarage Corner

The clerk had asked Cleanaway to quote to cut back the hedge but had not received a reply. In the meantime Mr Pusey said that Tim Jenkins (Trees of Eden) had quoted to do the job for £25. *He proposed that FPC accept this quotation. Mr Brooksbank seconded the proposal and all were agreed.*

2. Recreation Ground Trust Funding

Mr Pusey said that some RGT funds had been earmarked to provide two extra seats for the Recreation Ground and for a basketball net for the hard court.

3. Bowls Club Fence

This had now been repaired.

4. Repairs/Installations

Mr Dash had done a number of jobs for the council including the installation of a new seat, a safety rail (in the play area) and new 5-a-side junior goal post sockets. He had also re-fixed the slatted seat by the football pitch and repaired the slab on the village sign.

5. Ash Tree at the end of the Illingworth Way footpath

Eastern Landscape Services had submitted a quotation for £900 plus VAT to reduce the crown of this tree by 30% and clear the arisings. *This was thought to be rather expensive and the clerk was asked to get further quotations.*

The clerk said she had written to Cleanaway to accept parts of the firm's quotation for tree work etc as requested.

Dr Grindley said the council should guard against irregular tendering procedure. The quotation from Eastern Landscape Services for reduction of the Ash tree crown had been looked at before other quotations had been sought – quotations should be sought at the same time. Mr Pusey said he agreed.

Before moving to the Finance Committee report, it was agreed that a donation of £20 should be given to Mrs Mees-Grove towards the expenses of the voluntary planting work she had carried out to the area of the Recreation Ground at the rear of the Illingworth Way houses.

FINANCE

Mr Hockley gave details of the bank Account as follows:

Deposit Account	£28,558.49
(This included interest of £32.85 for the period 5/9/05-4/12/05 and a deposit of £12,500 being a grant from Local Heritage Initiative towards the dovecote restoration project)	

Current Account	£112.10
(This included credit of £59 for an unrepresented cheque issued in April 2005)	

Cambridge Building Society	£8401.13
(This included the 2 nd half yearly interest payment credited 31/12/05 of £101.08)	

Mr Hockley proposed that the following cheques be approved:

Hewitsons (legal costs and first year's rental for Dovecote/Meadow)	£1251.00
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G Dash (various repair and installation work)	£296.91
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Ian Sanderson (reimbursement for further 2 year's domain name for village website)	£10.55
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Foxton VHT (hire of Meeting Room 7/11, Lounge 2 & 22/11 and Foyer 3 & 8/11)	£43.50
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D Salmons Fencing (repairing and renewing Bowls Club fence)	£800.00
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Cambridgeshire ACRE (membership renewal)	£25.00
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CALC (Local Council Review subscription renewal for 2006/07)	£14.00
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J E Burns (salary for December 2005, January 2006 and back pay for increased hours October/November 2005)	£608.48
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J E Burns (expenses November/December 2005)	£40.69
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V W Mead (refuse collection, ground maintenance and ½ yearly inspection of Play Area, December 2005)	£34.50
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Inland Revenue (tax on JEB/VWM earnings for 3 months to 5/1/06)	£193.82
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Mr Barnes seconded the proposal and all were agreed that these payments, totalling £3318.45, should be made and that £3257 should be transferred from the Deposit Account to the Current Account.

Mr Hockley reported that the Tennis Club had been invoiced in the sum of £5 for the 2005 rental and the County Council's grass cutting contribution of £1079.12 had been applied for.

Mr Hockley then gave some preliminary (approximate) figures that would need to be taken into account when the committee recommends a figure for the 2006/07 precept.

As SCDC would cease to maintain the streetlamps in Foxton in the coming financial year and would not be making recycling credits, some £1,1000 additional funds would be needed for 2006/07 before considering any requirements from projects within the parish – these items alone representing about 10% extra on the precept.

Administrative costs would rise from £4800 to £5100 due to an increase in the clerk's hours to cover holiday entitlement.

Costs for Recreations and Amenities were expected to rise from £8800 to £11400 including £1000 contingency, £3000 for tree work £750 for two new seats and £525 for basketball goals.

Other items included an estimated £600 in legal fees for land transfers, a contribution to an additional security camera for the Community Building, personal alarms (Foxton Help Group) and McSplash had asked for help.

Funds would also be required for contributions to the Skateboard/BMX Park and Dovecote/Meadow projects.

Mr Hockley concluded by saying that although balances were fortunately in a reasonably healthy state, there would undoubtedly be a significant hike in the precept.

It was agreed that the situation regarding streetlamps was very unsatisfactory. It was confirmed that the Finance Committee would meet on the 16th January to discuss the precept for the 2006/07 financial year.

PLANNING

Cemex Development Plans

Mr Brooksbank said that of the 16 parish councils whose representatives had been meeting to discuss the Cemex development plans, the vast majority would oppose it.

He said an organisation called SCAPE (South Cambridgeshire Action for the Protection of the Environment) had been set up to act as a fund-raising body for the group of councils, but independent of them. SCAPE was in the process of finding a consultant to act on its behalf, and a fee of circa £5000 plus VAT was anticipated. Parish Councils had been asked, at their next meetings, to endorse SCAPE as a legitimate organisation.

Some qualms were expressed by councillors about endorsing an organisation that was not a registered charity and it was agreed to defer recognition of the body pending further information.

Mrs Roberts suggested FPC seek advice from the SCDC Monitoring Officer (now Colin Tucker).

Mr Pusey thanked Mr Brooksbank for his report.

Mr Barnes then reported as follows:

Planning Permission refused:

M and J Kohler	Application No. S/1915/05/F for an outbuilding at "Bartholomews", Shepreth Road Contrary to Policy EN30 and detrimental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
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Planning Permission granted:

Mr and Mrs Stanford	Application No. S/2126/05/F for an extension at 39 Station Road Usual condition
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Tree application:

Mr McCombie	Ref. C/11/40/30 for thinning and shortening work on 2 Rowan trees No comment
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(It was confirmed that the council's application in respect of the Dovecote had been approved subject to conditions and that formal notification would be received in due course.)

Applications considered at the meeting:

Mr and Mrs Kendall	Application No. S/2375/05/F for an extension at 22 Barrington Road Approved
P Ridgeon	Application No. S/2263/05/F for part demolition and conversion of Press building into 4 terraced houses, 1 detached house and the erection of 3 houses and 4 affordable flats

This application had been well publicised before the meeting and a good number of parishioners had come along on this account. Before seeking parishioners' views, councillors were asked to comment on the plans that were on display and had already been examined.

Mr Barnes read a letter from the director of Burlington Press that said the firm would welcome a reduction in its working space with a corresponding reduction in rental as, without a significant lowering of the rental, it might need to look for alternative premises. The letter was included with the circulating correspondence. It was thought the firm would lose about 15-20,000 square feet of space.

Mr Brooksbank noted that, although it was planned to retain the frontage, the height would be raised. He also noted that although it was planned to move the electricity sub-station from its current position, the new location had not been specified. He also thought double yellow lines might be needed at the junction, as on-street parking would not be prevented by the provision of off-street parking in the plans. Mr Barnes

pointed out that the only access to the site was now from Station Road whereas previous plans had shown access from the High Street.

Mrs Roberts said that Bob Morgan would be overseeing this application as it was considered to be large and sensitive and that it would be considered at the February meeting. She said that so far there had not been an officers' recommendation on the application and that loss of employment was not considered an issue.

Dr Grindley commented that the parking provision, including garages, seemed meagre.

Comments were then received from the visitors' seats as follows (names in brackets where known):

- If this application goes ahead as well as that of the old school site there would be two access roads off Station Road at the same point (*Mr Brew*).
- What about visitors if there are not enough parking spaces?
- The village would have a main road and a crossroads very close together making this a very busy junction.
- The same objections that led to refusal of the 1998 application appear to apply to this application.
- Other objections were: building on the flood plain, congestion, and loss of amenity in the vicinity of the War Memorial.
- The War Memorial environment would be changed and what would it be like to live so close to a factory? (*Mr Challis*)

(Mrs Roberts said that the density of new developments was about 33 to the hectare and that village amenity and conservation would be considered.)

- Those carded on the application have been invited to write to the District Council with their views – what action would the Parish Council take.

Mr Pusey said that was what the council was presently considering and Mrs Roberts asked residents to let her have their views as well.

Discussion of the application then returned to councillors. Dr McKeown asked whether development of the old school site would form a part of the consideration of this application. It was confirmed that this would not be the case and that the application would be considered on its own merits. Mrs Roberts said that quality of design, the percentage of affordable housing, the amount of traffic in the complex and noise issues would all be matters to be considered. Mrs Roberts was asked why only 4 of the proposed 12 dwellings were designated as affordable housing. Mrs Roberts said that she had expected 50% affordable housing and would ask officers about this.

Mr Barnes remarked on the comments in the design report to the effect that the memorial was not well maintained and that it had a backdrop of an electricity sub-station. He added that he couldn't see that FPC would take a different view to that it had taken for the previous application.

Dr Grindley said that in May 2005 the council had been concerned about front doors opening directly onto the pavement giving rise to on-street parking and this was agreed to be a valid point.

Mr Pusey proposed that the council oppose the application with the wording to be agreed by the Planning Committee. Dr Grindley seconded the proposal and all were agreed.

POLICE LIAISON REPORT

Miss Thake said she had nothing to report this month.

RECREATION GROUND TRUST REPORT

Mr Pusey reported that the Trustees had met recently. The sale of the extra land for the Recreation Ground was still with the solicitors. However, the County Council would allow entry onto the site ahead of finalisation of the sale.

£200,000 had been put into a fund for the long-term maintenance of the Community Building and an invoice sent to the school for its part under the terms of the management agreement. The Trustees would have liked to put more money into the fund but had to keep sufficient funds available to produce enough interest income for the maintenance of the Recreation Ground.

The accounts for 2004/05 had been completed and reflected the setting up of the fund. Mr Pusey proposed a vote of thanks to John Callin, a previous FPC Vice-Chairman, without whose work the capital sum would not have been available, both for this and for his work on valuing the costs within the fund. He also proposed a vote of thanks to Peter Sutton for his help with the accounts. *All agreed and the clerk was asked to write to both Mr Callin and Mr Sutton. Mr Barnes also thanked Mr Pusey for all his work.*

Mr Pusey reported that there was a small piece of land in the wrong ownership although the Trustees had a responsibility to maintain it. A valuation would be required before this anomaly could be resolved. *There were no objections to the sale of the land to the Trustees.*

Recreation Ground Extension

Mr Brooksbank reported that the Recreation Ground Extension Committee (REGEC) had had one more meeting - essentially to initiate the fund-raising process. SCDC grants would not be available without a significant input of funds from the Parish Council. He said that Foxton Gardens Association were about to set up a sub-committee.

Skateboard/BMX Park

Dr Mckeown said that Mr Smith had re-run part of the original article about the Skateboard/BMX Park in "The Laurentian" in more strident tones. The response had been minimal with no response from the younger people of the village. He said he had prepared a notice for the older children at the school in the hopes of getting some response from them or their parents. Dr Mckeown said he was also investigating the possibility of equipment within the council that would be within the council's means.

He had a “ball park” figure of £14,000 for pre-cast concrete equipment plus groundwork costs.

Mrs Roberts said that the council would need to be careful about the Health and Safety aspects and suggested contacting Jane Lampshire at SCDC.

Mr Pusey urged the visitors present to get as much response as possible on this project.

Mr Howard (in the visitors’ seats) complained that skateboarders were using the slide in the children’s play area.

DOVECOTE/MEADOW PROJECT

The various legal documents (Leases, Declarations and Notices) were ready for signing by the Chairman and clerk and there was a break in the proceedings while the documents were signed by them and witnessed by Mr Challis. The clerk then received the documents to forward to the council’s solicitors. Subject to the clearance of the cheque, Mr Pusey said that FPC now holds the leasehold interest in this site for 25 years.

CORRESPONDENCE

As the clerk was unwell, and left the meeting shortly after this point in the proceedings, Mr Pusey summarised the correspondence received in the past month, which is given in full below:

- 1) Letter dated 28th November from CCC requesting help with two projects to provide “Missing Links” to Public Rights of Way: enclosing leaflet on Rights of Way.
- 2) Letter dated 2nd December 2005 from CCC Head of Service, Groomfields, offering to tender for grass cutting in Foxton: enclosing leaflet about tree maintenance and surgery.
- 3) Letter dated 2nd December 2005 from the SCDC Environmental Services Manager re the council’s decision to cease funding the maintenance and power costs of footway lighting: enclosing schedule of lights in Foxton and a list of frequently asked questions with answers.
- 4) Letter dated 5th December 2005 from the CCC South Highways Division warning that grass cutting activities within the villages may be reduced from 5 cuts to 4 for the next year and that a cut in grant should be anticipated.
- 5) Letter dated 6th December from the CCC Customer Relations Officer re changes to local bus services.
- 6) Letter dated 7th December from CCC Customer Relations Officer re changes to local bus services enclosing list of contracts to be re-tendered.
- 7) Letter dated 7th December from CCC re the Parish Paths Partnership 2006/07 inviting applications from parish councils wishing to help protect, improve maintain and promote their local Rights of Way paths networks.
- 8) Letter dated 12th December from SCDC re Parish Precepts for 2006/07.
(Original to BH)

- 9) Letter dated 12th December written on behalf of the “Patient and Public Involvement in Health Forums” (supported by Cambridgeshire ACRE): enclosing article for parish magazines.
- 10) Letter dated 14th December from Andrew Lansley enclosing a copy letter from CCC regarding the possibility of land being made available for parking at Foxton Railway Station and seeking FPC’s views. *(The clerk had left the meeting at this time but Mr Pusey said he would ask her to reply saying the council was interested in this land being used as a car park)*
- 11) Letter dated 15th December from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister enclosing a discussion paper setting out the Government’s vision for a future comprehensive conduct regime for local authority members and employees.
- 12) Letter dated 15th December from CCC Customer Relations Officer re use of parish newsletters to disseminate information: enclosing form.
- 13) Letter dated 19th December from SCDC acknowledging the council’s letter about Village Green Space Funding re the Foxton Dovecote/Meadow.
- 14) Letter dated 21st December from Andrew Lansley asking to know the current situation regarding the provision of allotments at Foxton in connection with a constituency surgery query from Mrs Cook. *(The clerk replied to this letter 3/1/06)*
- 15) Letter dated 22nd December from CCC enclosing consultation leaflets about the level of council tax for 2006/07 and giving a schedule of dates and venues for surgeries in libraries on the subject.
- 16) Letter dated 23rd December from SCDC re footway lighting enclosing a schedule of lights that may meet the council’s criteria for adoption.
- 17) Letter dated January 2006 from Cambridgeshire Police Authority re its consultation with the business sector and the general public on its budget for the year 2006/07. enclosing agenda for a consultation meeting at “The Ark”, Great Cambourne, to be held on 25th January, and a schedule of other budget meetings - including one at Sawston Village College on 15th February).
- 18) Letter dated 1st January from CPRE about a planning applications workshop for parish and town councillors (cost £30) to be held on 11th March 2006 in Wimblington: enclosing booking form.
- 19) Letter dated 5th January 2006 from Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority re its 2006/07 precept and advising of public consultation meeting on 19th January: responses welcomed.
- 20) Letter dated 6 January from Dr John Heap, Chairman of Harston and District Village Warden Trust suggesting Foxton joins this scheme at a projected cost of about £375 per annum: enclosing job and services descriptions for the Village Warden. *(To be passed to the Finance committee for consideration at its precept meeting on 16th January and to be copied to Ann Sanderson if the Foxton Help Group)*
- 21) Letter dated 6th January from the SCDC Director of Housing and Environmental Services acknowledging receipt of the council’s letter about the

old school site, which has been passed to the Head of Strategic Housing Services.

- 22) Letter from Cambridgeshire Constabulary enclosing an invitation to the Cambridgeshire Rural Issues Seminar from 7-9pm on Thursday, 26th January at Burgess Hall, St Ives (free buffet).
- 23) Letter dated 6th January from Cemex re the next meeting of the Barrington Cement Plant Liaison Group to be held on Thursday, 19th January: enclosing agenda and notes of the last meeting. *(RB to attend)*
- 24) Letter dated 6th January from CCC on behalf of the Rural Estates Manager enclosing a questionnaire in connection with the CCC's review of the future strategy for managing the County Farms Estate. *(DP to complete)*
- 25) Information from CALC including:
 - Memo re SCDC's capping proposals in connection with streetlamp provision and legal advice to councils: requesting feedback
 - Memo re Quality Panel sitting and number of elected councillors
 - CCC Historical Resource and Cultural Centre (HRCC) consultation questionnaire
 - New CILCA training schedule and booking form
 - Details of training courses and workshop
 - Table of Parochial Fees for period commencing 1 January 2006
 - Bulletin, December
- 26) Letter from SCDC enclosing South Cambs Event Guide and information about other services.
- 27) Letter from Cambridgeshire Local Access Forum enclosing leaflet and poster giving schedule of meetings.
- 28) Letter from the CCC Road Safety Officer (Publicity) enclosing leaflet and poster (displayed) for the National Drink Drive Campaign
- 29) Leaflet from RoSPA.
- 30) Cambridgeshire ACRE magazine, "Community Action", Winter 2005.
- 31) South Cambs magazine and Tenants Newsletter, Winter 2005.
- 32) "Clerks and Councils Direct" magazine, January 2006 and Councils Suppliers Guide and Yearbook, 2006.
- 33) Local Council Review, January 2006.
- 34) Publicity material from Elbe, Miracle and Bigfoot (play equipment); MD Landscapes; Market Town (websites) and Fitzpatrick Woolmer (notice boards).

(The clerk had left the meeting by this time and the remaining Minutes were taken by Miss Thake)

VISITORS' QUESTIONS

Regarding the extension to the Recreation Ground, Mr Challis asked for confirmation that the Parish Council had received permission to clear the ground although the purchase had not been finalised.

Mr Pusey confirmed this was correct.

Mr A Miller reported having received a visit from Cemex saying the firm had had complaints of smells coming from Foxton going towards Harston, and asked whether the council had been visited or heard anything.

No-one on the council was able to comment.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Brooksbank had taken digital photographs and Colin Waring of Barrington superimposed an image of the proposed Cemex chimney on these to see what it would look like. He suggested that council members contact him if they would like to see them.

Mr Pusey reported a telephone call received by the clerk from Mrs Collins (Fowlmere Road) complaining about the state of the pavement outside her house due to people coming from the footpath and leaving mud on the pavement or scraping mud from their shoes there thus making the pavement slippery, and leaving sticks used to scrape their shoes on the pavement.

Mr Barnes asked about the need to repair potholes on Vicarage Corner. Mr Hockley said that these would be filled once other work on this corner had been carried out.

Dr Grindley said that the Cricket Club groundsman had asked for the junior goal posts to be removed some time soon from their present site, so that the grass would have time to re-grow before the start of the cricket season. It was agreed to pass this request to Mr Chilton.

Mr McCraith, referring to the County Council's budget consultation letter (Correspondence, item15) said that as Cambridgeshire was the fastest growing county, a 4.5% increase in Council Tax – 2.1% above average was not a large amount.

Mrs Roberts referring to the District Council's previous budget, said that there had been huge growth and that the IT budget had to be taken into account. The results of capping had led to severe cuts in budgets and services, and some of these cuts had had to be passed onto parishes. This was why recycling credits had stopped and streetlights would be turned off unless parish councils paid for the electricity and maintenance.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was confirmed that this would be held on **Monday, 6th February 2006 at 7.45** in the **Meeting room** of the Village Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.10pm.