

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FOXTON PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY, 11th JUNE 2012 AT 7.45 p.m.

PRESENT

Dr Oakley, Dr Grindley, Mr Bore, Mr Barnes, Mr Elliott, Mr McCreery, Mrs Macintyre, Mrs McFadzean and Mr Sutton

County Councillor Susan van de Ven

District Councillor Deborah Roberts

IN ATTENDANCE

16 members of the public

APOLOGIES

None

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.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

One amendment was needed:

Under the Finance Report (page 14, 2nd paragraph) the wording should have been “Mr McCreery (*not Mrs Macintyre*) had asked Mr Sutton to contact AON etc”.

Dr Oakley proposed that, with this amendment, the Minutes of the Annual Meeting, held on Monday, 14th May 2012, be signed as a true record. Mrs McFadzean seconded the proposal and all were agreed.

As there were a number of youngsters in the visitors’ seats, Dr Oakley said he would allow them to address the meeting at this juncture, rather than wait until “Visitors’ Questions” near the end of the meeting, but first explained briefly how the parish council functioned.

The spokesman for the group, which had earlier presented the council with a petition for a “Half Pipe” to replace the existing bike track, made the following points:

- The existing bike track had not been well maintained and was not pleasant to use
- The bike track was not suitable for scooters
- A half-pipe” instalment would be more popular

Mr McCreery said that the proposal for a half pipe instead of the BMX track would be looked at by the Recreation and Amenities Group, which was also looking at the development of the hard standing area. However, before the council could give its blessing to the half-pipe scheme, he said it would be necessary to carry out a consultation exercise to find out whether it was the majority wish to replace the bike track with a half pipe installation. There was a big problem with funding as so much had been spent on the upgrade for the Play Area. The latter had cost a great deal of money, some of which had been provided by fund raising events organised by a group formed for the purpose of developing the Play Area. This group had been able to apply for substantial grants following the success of its fund raising efforts.

Mr McCreery suggested that the best way to proceed, if it were established that this was the preferred option, would be to form a similar group. The group should investigate costings for equipment, installation and ground preparation and undertake fund-raising events preparatory to making grant applications.

Various suggestions were made about the type of equipment that would be desirable, and that at Haslingfield was cited as being a very good example.

However, there was a balance to be struck between the amount of equipment proposed and the time it would take to achieve the necessary funding in time for the youngsters present to enjoy it.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Jubilee Celebrations

Dr Oakley said the celebrations had been a great success with everyone enjoying themselves and many thanks were due to Mrs McFadzean and her committee for organising the event and to the Help Group who had organised things for the over-60's.

Mrs McFadzean thanked the council for its financial support and said her group had embraced a "can do" attitude that had made organising the event run very smoothly.

The question arose about storage of the beacon and it was thought Mr Salmons might be able to store it in his barn. The possibility of hiring the beacon out (with safeguards such as insurance in place) was also mooted.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Dr van de Ven reported as follows:

1. A large lorry had been parked overnight near the entrance to the school just after the Jubilee and Dr van de Ven thanked the resident who had reported it. She had passed details on to the police.
2. White lines had been put down as requested at Vicarage Corner and the pavement at Vicarage Corner would be smoothed down in the worst places for which she thanked the Highways Department whose budget was far too small to make the kind of fundamental improvements that were needed.
3. Melbourn Library Access Point had been very pleased to receive a donation from Foxton parish council, and Dr van de Ven thanked the council for this.

4. The Rail User Group had been delighted to receive a donation from the Foxton Gardens Association toward the provision of plants for the Station tubs. This was much appreciated.

5. Dr van de Ven had spoken again with the landowner about possible parking for the station parking on land between the car wash and the Cambridge-bound platform: she had also asked if he would be able to sell or lease the land to the parish council. A response was awaited.

6. Melbourn Area Youth Development: It had been decided, on request, to revert transport arrangements back to lifts owing to the lack of take-up from the regular stopping service: Royston and District Community Transport was happy to shift around arrangements accordingly. There had been a decent overall attendance at the youth club and Dr van de Ven said she would be suggesting to MAYD that the scope of “youth development” be explored to go beyond the Tuesday evening club and look at other successful activities, such as the after-school basketball club (which included students from Foxton), the Rail Station gardening project, which now had interest from Melbourn Village College students in an after-school club format and from Duke of Edinburgh Award students looking to fulfil skills/volunteering requirements.

7. Public meeting with Network Rail Managing Director on 21st May

Dr van de Ven thanked everyone who supported the May 21st meeting with Network Rail’s Managing Director, Dave Ward, at Foxton Village Hall. The meeting had been devoted entirely to questions and answers, with a frank and constructive discussion. Mr Ward explained the bureaucratic processes which had held up the upgrade of the self-locking systems and outlined short term improvements to the pedestrian crossings currently underway as follows:

- i) Repair of the self-locking pedestrian gates would be completed by 30th July
- ii) CCTV cameras covering the two pedestrian crossings would be installed; meaning that, if safety concerns arose, evidence would be available to review what went wrong (at present only some movement was captured, because existing cameras were focused only on the vehicle crossing)
- iii) Electronic equipment inside the signal box would be relocated to improve the field of vision out the window for the crossing keeper
- iv) Lighting would be installed so that both pedestrian crossings were illuminated

Mr Ward then raised the matter of longer-term safety improvements, in line with Network Rail’s aspiration to close the level crossing. It was agreed by the meeting (which included the relevant county council officer) that the best outcome would depend on an approach that took road and rail as an integrated system and involved a joint approach with the county council. Dr van de Ven would be meeting with Mr Ward and with senior county council officers on 14th June to discuss what Network Rail means by its aspiration to close the level crossing and to scope out the next steps. The outcome of this meeting would be reported to the next meeting of Foxton Parish Council. Dr van de Ven said that no doubt this would be an ongoing discussion as it has been for decades (she remembered it well from when she lived in Foxton twenty-four years ago!). However, the problem was not getting any better and it seemed to Dr van de Ven that advantage should be taken of the current Network Rail Managing Director’s interest in the situation.

The meeting had been filmed by Melbourn Village College students as part of their BBC School Report programme and could be seen at www.mvc.org.uk (under “Quick Links”, go to “BBC School Report”). In the question and answer session, the MVC students asked Mr Ward about level crossing education in schools. This would be arranged for local schools.

Dr van de Ven said she thought it was fair to say that, at the meeting, Mr Ward was detailed, direct and did not try to make excuses. People she had spoken to found him an open and credible person who was trying to get things done, and who was listening to what those present had to say.

Dr van de Ven said she had submitted an article about the meeting to the “Laurentian” and said that any prospect of a road bridge depended on how much money Network Rail was prepared to commit.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT

Mrs Roberts said that this was the start of the new year for the District Council and that committees remained politically represented proportionately: she was the representative for Independent councillors on the Planning Committee. Mrs Roberts said that the district council leader had decided to appoint chairmen and vice-chairmen of committees rather than the committees make these appointments themselves as in the past.

The Leader had also decided to disband the Planning Enforcement Committee, which Mrs Roberts was not in favour of as enforcement matters would receive even less attention than before. This highlighted the problem of the former Q8 garage. The SCDC Planning Committee had instructed the Planning Department to make an application on behalf of the garage for the activities carried out on the site. This instruction had not been carried out and when queried the response had been that it was a low priority. Mrs Roberts recommended the council write to the Local Councils Ombudsman in view of the unacceptable delays that had been endured in this matter.

It had been intended that the SCDC Housing Portfolio holder would hold a meeting on 13th June to consider the approach by Endurance Estates to be allowed to have access across the belt of grass at the front of the Press Cottages to its proposed development to the rear of Station Road. However, the Housing Portfolio holder was holding this matter over until an application had been submitted and approved.

Dr Grindley said that it was disappointing that no mention had been made of Foxton parish council’s formal request to have ownership of the grassed area between the Press Cottages and Station Road transferred into its name.

Mrs Roberts said that she had been in discussion with landowners in Foxton about the availability of land for affordable housing. Any houses developed on the land in question would be partly for part sale and partly for rent.

REPORTS FROM THE WORKING PARTIES

RECREATION AND AMENITIES

Mr McCreery reported as follows:

1. Play Area

The Play Area was opened by the Chairman of South Cambridgeshire District Council, Tony Orgee. A large number of children rushed into the area as soon as the ribbon was cut and all seemed to have enjoyed using the new equipment. David Salmons had painted the swings and the central playhouse and had installed the new picnic tables. In addition he had built and fitted a new gate and made minor repairs to the fences.

ROSPA had carried out a post-installation inspection on 15th May. There were a number of items to be completed at that time, mainly surfacing, and all had now been completed.

Mr McCreery said he had formally applied for the grants from the major donors to the upgrade, Amey Cespa and South Cambridgeshire district council, to be made.

2. Half Pipe

The group had submitted an item to “The Laurentian” for the July issue asking for feedback on the proposal for a half-pipe and for views on the retention of the existing BMX track.

The group had also asked for comments on the proposals for the hard standing including the installation of a second basketball net, court markings and playground markings and tracks. Carrying out these changes successfully might require re-surfacing of the hard court.

3. Litter Pick

The proposed litter pick would be held on Sunday, 15th July. Volunteers would meet at 11.00am in the Village Hall car park. This information and a request for helpers had been included in the article submitted to “The Laurentian”.

4. QEII Fields in Trust Application

The plaque borrowed by the group for the Jubilee party had been returned and the council should receive its own plaque within the next two months. The group would then need to decide where to position it – Mr McCreery suggested positioning the plaque by the car parking spaces near the pavilion.

5. Other Matters

The new solar light had been installed on the corner of the allotments.

The ball wall would be re-sited so that play would take place behind its existing position and the hole left would be filled in by soil from the Bowls Club’s patio extension.

The metal post in the car park had been removed and the memorial tree sign had been re-positioned on the tree itself.

FINANCE

Mr Sutton gave details of the bank accounts as follows:

Deposit Account		£20,158.67
Current Account		£50.61
(This included Club contributions to running and maintenance costs for the training lights of £180.00)		
Barclays Bank Premium 10-day Notice Account		
	£30,678.62	
Add: interest on closure of Standard Life A/C	78.37	
Add: monthly interest on new A/C	<u>22.96</u>	£30,799.95

Mr Sutton proposed the following cheques for payment:

CAPALC (subscription for 2012/13)	£402.58
N Oakley (1 st ½ Chairman's Honorarium)	£80.00
Aon Limited (insurance premium renewal)	£2,399.88
Foxton Village Hall (hire of Meeting Room 14/5, 21/5 and pavilion 10/5)	£39.50
Post Office Ltd (for SCDC annual charge for emptying dog bins 1/4/12-31/3/13)	£473.74
Playsafety Limited (post installation inspection of play area equipment)	£474.00
CGM (Cambridge) Ltd (grass cutting March, April & May)	£660.00
D Salmons (Village Warden duties May & early June plus extra work and materials)	£502.00
R McCreery (reimbursement for new signs @ £340.80 & champagne for play area opening @ £54)	£394.80
C McFadzean (reimbursement for Jubilee food, decorations, photocopying & 2 gas canisters)	£230.68
J Buggy (reimbursement for craft materials & photocopying)	£140.39

Dr Oakley seconded the proposal and all were agreed that these payments, totalling £5797.57 should be made, and that £5,798 should be transferred from the Deposit Account to the Current Account.

PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr Bore reported as follows:

The committee had met on 11th June, with Mrs Joyce Ward the only member of the public present. Dr Grindley was re-elected as chairman of the committee.

Applications considered were from Mrs Joyce Ward and from Mr Duncan Macintyre. Dr Grindley and Mrs Macintyre declared an interest in the first and second application respectively and left the meeting when the application in which they had an interest was under consideration.

Mrs J Ward	Application No. S/0745/12/FL for construction of 1 No. 2-bed dwelling and 1 No. 3-bed dwelling following demolition of existing at 14 Fowlmere Road
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iii) Dr Grindley had received a communication from NALC explaining the legal position regarding application by the Parish Council to take over the ownership of the green area of land in front of the Press cottages, including the strip of land previously considered for sale by SCDC to Endurance Estates. The legal opinion was that the Localism Act was already in force insofar as it allowed the Secretary of State to decide on the outcome of applications for transfer of land in cases such as this.

iv) Dr Grindley had asked the clerk to circulate to the rest of the committee an e-mail from SCDC regarding the set-up and running costs for the Parish Council to obtain a “.gov.uk” web site.

An application for the reduction of the crowns of five cherry trees at 8-10 High Street had been received and would be considered at the committee’s next meeting.

PLAY AREA EQUIPMENT

A large invoice (£51,599.90 including VAT) for the new play equipment had been received from Kompan. Mr Sutton proposed that the contribution from the council, currently considered to be approximately £8,250, should be met from the S106 payment received in 2010/11. Mr McCreery seconded the proposal and all were agreed. Dr Oakley proposed that any payment on account to be made before the next Council meeting should be agreed between Mr Sutton and Mr McCreery. Mr Bore seconded the proposal and all agreed.

POLICE LIAISON REPORT

Mr Barnes reported the following incidents that had occurred since the last meeting of the parish council.

Hall Close	1 vehicle crime
High Street	Items stolen from garage
Hillfield	1 anti-social behaviour incident
Station Road/A10	1 burglary

A visitor to the present meeting reported 2 further burglaries in Shepreth Road

RECREATION GROUND TRUST (RGT) REPORT

Mrs McFadzean said the trustees had met on 23rd May when they agreed to accept the quotation provided by Shane Lodge for the conversion of a changing room in the pavilion to an office for the parish council. *Mr Bore said he would be meeting with Mr Lodge to discuss the provision of broadband supply for the office.*

The Pre-school group had accepted the RGT’s decision to allow a timber only fence with an additional 3rd gate for enclosing its outdoor area. *Mr Bore said that if the Pre-school group transferred ownership of the fence to the parish council, the fence could be included in the council’s insurance policy.*

The RGT gave approval for the Village Hall Trust to repair the broken electricity meter in the Village Hall at a cost of £351.

DOVECOTE/MEADOW REPORT

Mrs Macintyre said that thistles growing beside the path through the meadow needed to be strimmed. It was agreed to ask Mr Salmons to carry out this work.

CORRESPONDENCE

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

- 1) Letter from James Storer complaining about nettles by the Illingworth Way footpath to the Recreation Ground.
- 2) Letter dated 25th May from Cambridgeshire ACRE enclosing customer survey.
- 3) Letter from CCC Environment and Transport re bus changes from 10th June 2012.
- 4) Letter from CCC Environment and Transport giving web link for changes to Stagecoach services for 10th June.
- 5) Letter dated 6th June with details for having a parish council website hosted by SCDC.
- 6) Local Council Review, Summer 2012.
- 7) Publicity material from Community Games (website) and Barcham Trees.

VISITORS' QUESTIONS

Mr Challis added his congratulations to Mrs McFadzean and her team for organising the Jubilee celebrations so successfully. He also mentioned that cars were continuing to be parked at the bottom of Caxton Lane.

Mrs Ward said that ivy bordering the path at Vicarage Corner was becoming a nuisance.

Mr McCreery said he would ask Mr Salmons to look at this.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs Roberts reported that there were travellers in the area. They had camped in Fowlmere, Newton and Thriplow and she recommended being watchful.

Mr Sutton reported that the new Village Sign should be ready soon.

Mr Bore asked about the new sign with the correct spelling for the pavilion. Mr McCreery said that the old sign had already been replaced.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was confirmed that the next meeting would be held on **Monday, 2nd July 2012 at 7.45pm** in the **Meeting Room** of the **Village Hall**.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.30pm.