

## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FOXTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**HELD ON MONDAY, 3<sup>rd</sup> DECEMBER 2007, AT 7.45 p.m.**

**PRESENT** Dr Oakley, Dr Grindley, Mr Allars, Mr Barnes, Mr Bentinck, Dr McKeown,

**IN ATTENDANCE** 2 members of the public

**APOLOGIES** County Councillor, David McCraith

Before opening the meeting, Dr Oakley said he was sorry to announce that Mr Kennedy had resigned from the council, due to the pressure of his commitments. Dr Oakley said his best wishes went to Mr Kennedy and his thanks for his contribution to the council. He said that the council would need to consider possible candidates for co-option onto the council.

### **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations.

### **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

One amendment was necessary:

Under "Matters Arising From the Minutes – Oak tree at Hall Close", page 58, the last sentence of the paragraph should read, "Mr Barnes said he would meet (*not had met*) with the SCDC Trees Officer".

Dr Oakley proposed that, with this amendment, the Minutes of the previous Meeting, held on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2007, should be signed as a true record. Mr Allars seconded the proposal and all were agreed.

### **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

#### *Oak tree in Hall Close*

Mr Barnes said that the SCDC Trees officer would support an application for a grant towards the work necessary to be carried out on the tree.

#### *Meeting of the SCDC Scrutiny Committee held in Foxton on 15<sup>th</sup> November*

Mr Barnes and Mr Bentinck had attended this long meeting held in the Village Hall. They had received a pre-prepared answer to the query as to what the district council was doing to avert the closure of local Post Offices.

Regarding the second issue raised with SCDC about the difficulties encountered in communicating with the SCDC Planning Office, Mr Gareth Jones (SCDC Head of Planning) said that he took on board that there were problems. He said that the department had planning officers at a variety of levels who were being trained and

agreed that communication could be improved. Mr Jones was also reminded about the lack of progress regarding the council's own application for the extension to the Recreation Ground.

*Planning –proposed further changes to the East of England Plan*

Dr Grindley reported that he and Mr Barnes had met to discuss the recent communications on this matter. Unfortunately, the original consultation document was missing and could not be found on the internet and Mr Barnes had been asked to obtain a further copy. They had not so far formulated a response, but Dr Grindley had researched various government websites: these had revealed the process, but nothing that would directly affect Foxton, although the Local Development Framework would be affected. Dr Grindley said that the exercise had shown that FPC's procedures needed to be tightened up.

**PARISH PLAN**

Mr Allars reported that the first meeting of the steering group had been held in November. The first task would be the preparation of the village questionnaire, and some possible questions had been circulated to get the group's reaction. The group had also been asked to think of further questions to be included in the questionnaire. Further members would be joining the group, which would next meet in January 2008.

**REPORTS FROM THE COMMITTEE**

**RECREATION AND AMENITIES**

Mr Bentinck said the Committee had not met in the past month. He reported as follows:

Mr Salmons had done several jobs including repairing fencing, cutting back growth at Vicarage Corner and removing leaves.

The residents at 38 Illingworth Way had extended their garden into the planted area at the edge of the Recreation Ground. Although it had been agreed that Mrs Mees-Grove had been given the council's permission to carry out some planting in this area (with a contribution towards the cost from the council) and had been allowed to erect temporary fencing to protect the planting, it was never intended that the fencing should be allowed to remain permanently. There was some discussion about this matter. Dr Grindley pointed out that David Hamilton, the SCDC Landscape Officer was due to make suggestions about the maintenance and development of the planted area bordering the rear of Illingworth Way properties. It was also noted that the annual letters sent to residents to renew permission for access to the Recreation ground from their rear gardens were due to be sent out in the near future. It was agreed that residents could be reminded in this letter that the council would not permit annexation of any part of the Recreation Ground by residents.

Mr Bentinck said he still had to sort out the matting that was needed for the Recreation Ground and that this would be an expensive item.

**Trees Report**

Mr Barnes said he had met with the assistant SCDC Trees Officer, Robbie Barnes, who had been impressed by the Hall Close Oak tree and said a grant towards the work

needed should be forthcoming. He thought the tree was at least 300 years old. The officer also looked at the trees in the gravel car park. The tree nearest to the churchyard had been damaged by the **original** building work and now needed to be felled. On the bright side the felling of the tree would open up the space for the Memorial Oak tree. Apparently the older Horse Chestnuts (such as those at Vicarage Corner) that had suffered from blight this year were likely to recover provided that the leaves were collected and burned. Robbie Barnes had offered to assist with planting plans for new trees and would like to get local youths interested in helping with the project.

Three quotations for carrying out remedial work on the Hall Close Oak tree had been received. These were for £1,180, £640 and £500 (all excluding VAT). Another firm had declined to quote without a detailed specification from an Arboricultural Consultant. Mr Barnes said it was possible that the tree held a bat sanctuary and he would need guidance on this from Rob Mongovan. Mr Barnes agreed to follow up on this project.

### **FINANCE**

Dr Oakley gave details of the Bank Accounts as follows:

Deposit Account	£26,236.88
Current Account	£67.76
(A cheque to Emorsgate for £16, approved at the previous meeting, had been returned unpresented, as the invoice had already been paid by Mrs Cairns, who would therefore need to be reimbursed by this amount.)	
Cambridge Building Society	£13,855.78

Dr Oakley proposed that the following cheques be approved:

Foxton VHT (hire of Meeting Room 1 and 12 October)	£25.00
Veolia ES (UK) Ltd (grass cutting in 2007)	£4,676.43
C Cairns (reimbursement for wild flower seeds from Emorsgate)	£16.00
Dr Ian Sanderson (reimbursement for renewal of Foxton website domain fee)	£9.94
V W Mead (back pay dating from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2007)	£5.48
D Salmons Fencing Services (Village Warden duties, and other work, November)	£187.00

Mr Barnes seconded the proposal and all were agreed that these payments, totalling £4,919.85, should be made and that £4,909 be transferred from the Deposit Account to the Current Account.

### **PLANNING**

Mr Barnes reported as follows:

#### **Trees**

Mrs L Pesci	Deemed consent for the removal of a Beech tree in the rear garden of The Spinney, 69 Station Road Tree suffering from Beech bark disease and deteriorating
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**Planning permission granted:**

Mr & Mrs Winterbottom	Application No. S/1940/07/F for extensions at 53 Station Road Usual conditions
Mr M Manning	Application No. S/1836/07/F for extension to form pitched roof Usual conditions

**Planning permission refused:**

Mr & Mrs C Frewin	Application No. S/1877/07/F for a dwelling at 65 High Street Development contrary to various SCDC LDF Development Control Policies and would result in loss of amenity to occupiers of nos. 63 and 67 High Street
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**Planning applications considered at the meeting:**

Mr S A Rivers	Application No. S/2078/07/F for change of use of garden land, garden buildings and kennels to office and storage. Also new entrance gate and fence increased in height Approve
Mr & Mrs G Smith	Application No. S/2067/07/LB for alterations at 13 High Street, including removal of defective timber and cement render, and replacement with seasoned oak timber framing, timber lath and lime render Approve
Dr J Anderson	Application No. S/2072/07/F for extensions at 41 Hillfield Approve

Dr Grindley reported that he had received a letter to the council from CCC on the proposed national standardisation of planning applications. The council had only till 21<sup>st</sup> December to make its response. Dr Grindley said that, should these proposals be adopted, there would be a huge shift of onus onto the applicant to address such matters as sewage capacity, together with a shift of emphasis from district councils to parish councils. He thought these changes could cause the parish council some problems and thought CALC should be consulted. It was also proposed to move to wholly electronic submissions and consultation. Dr Grindley said that an application is a statutory declaration and questioned whether an electronic format was suitable in this respect. The wish to reduce the number of paper copies of plans was driving this change. However, wholly electronic management of the process would cause problems for residents without computers or modems from accessing the plans and would also create difficulties in meetings, where expensive equipment would be

needed to project the plans. The proposals would also result in there being 26 different planning portals.

Dr Oakley proposed that, in view of the limited time available in which to make a response, Dr Grindley be asked to respond on the council's behalf. Dr McKeown seconded the proposal and all were agreed.

Dr McKeown asked how things stood regarding the council's application for the Recreation Ground extension. Mr Barnes said that Gareth Jones had led him to believe that he would look into this matter and he would chase this up.

Dr McKeown said that there had been no objections to getting on with the necessary earth-moving on the Recreation Ground extension at the REGEC meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November, he had gone ahead with obtaining 3 quotations for the work. Dr Grindley said that the only risk in this course of action would arise if planning permission were refused, when the council would have to appeal the decision.

Dr Grindley further reported that the present date was the deadline for responses to the consultation on the North West Cambridge Plan. The area in question was substantially used by the University as farmland, **pending future development**, and the Plan appeared to do no more than modify the University's wishes. He had therefore concluded there was no need to comment. The council agreed a response was unnecessary.

### **POLICE LIAISON REPORT**

Mr Bentinck said there had been no reported incidents in the past month, but he had finally received a reply from PC Garwood to his comments. Speeding had been identified as the last issue of concern at the panel meeting. However, it was open to parishes to request a speed check and to stipulate the time of day. It was agreed to request a speed check in Fowlmere Road on a weekday morning.

### **RECREATION GROUND TRUST REPORT**

There was nothing to report this month. It was agreed that RGT would hold a meeting on Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> December at 8pm.

#### **Recreation Ground Extension**

It was thought that some of the grant money for the project could be used to supply water across the site and for the necessary earth-moving.

The clerk had received an invoice addressed to the parish council for the water supplied to the allotments. Payment of the water company for the water supply was the responsibility of Foxton Gardens Association, and the clerk was asked to get the invoice transferred.

Dr McKeown said that the Trust's solicitors had suggested the approach to be made to the Cricket Club regarding its lease – the Trust would have to be pragmatic.

Foxton Gardens Association wished to plant some memorial trees and Dr McKeown had pointed out to Jon Cairns that landscaping had to be a consideration.

### **DOVECOTE/MEADOW PROJECT**

There was nothing to report this month.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Dr Oakley reported that he had received a letter of thanks from Mr Pusey for the presentation gift and for the council's appreciation of his contribution to the village during his period of chairmanship of the council.

The clerk then summarised the correspondence received in the past month, which is given in full below:

- 1) Letter dated 26<sup>th</sup> October from CCC Street Lighting Section with an inventory of Local Council lamps (requiring to be checked) and notice of maintenance charges for 1/4/08-31/3/09.
- 2) Letter dated 12<sup>th</sup> November enclosing a copy of the South Cambridgeshire District Council's Parish Plan Statement. *Passed to DA*
- 3) Letter dated 15<sup>th</sup> November from the CCC Principal Planning Officer re Consultation on the Introduction of the National Standard Planning Application Form (1APP) to be obligatory from 6 April 2008: enclosing questionnaire (to be returned by 21<sup>st</sup> December) and other enclosures.
- 4) Letter dated 21<sup>st</sup> November from the SCDC Democratic Services Officer enclosing a copy of the Association of Council Secretaries and Solicitors' Parish Council Toolkit; also enclosing a copy of the latest Standards Committee Newsletter.
- 5) Letter dated 21<sup>st</sup> November from the SCDC head of Planning re Milestones and Mileposts: enclosing leaflet re the Milestone Society and details of local milestones/mileposts within the parish. The letter recommends regular inspection and liaison with the Milestone Society.
- 6) Letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> November from SCDC thanking the council for the use of Foxton Village Hall for the SCDC Scrutiny and Overview Committee meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> November.
- 7) Letter dated 26<sup>th</sup> November from CCC enclosing copy of the new Concessionary Bus Fare Scheme Poster (*displayed*).
- 8) Letter received 26<sup>th</sup> November from the CCC Public Transport Manager re contracted bus services with reminder that responses to the consultation on contracted bus services should be received by 5<sup>th</sup> December 2007.
- 9) Letter dated 26<sup>th</sup> November from CCC re changes to mobile library routes from 7<sup>th</sup> January 2008.
- 10) Letter dated 27<sup>th</sup> November from Cemex re a special meeting of the Liaison Group to be held at the Barrington Plant on 6<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm.
- 11) Letter from Cambridgeshire ACRE re the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Rural Services Survey 2007 enclosing questionnaire for return by 14<sup>th</sup> December 2007. *Agreed that the clerk would liaise with NO to respond*
- 12) Information from CALC including:

- Recommended pay rates for clerks and manual workers from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007
  - Leaflets on workshops and CILCA training
- 13) SCDC Housing Futures newsletter and a newsletter from the Independent Tenants Advisor.
  - 14) “Clerks and Councils Direct” magazine, November 2007.
  - 15) South Cambs magazine, Winter 2007
  - 16) Leaflet from Cambridgeshire Local Access forum giving details of forthcoming meetings and activities.
  - 17) Publicity material from BTCV (wild flowers etc), Wicksteed, SMP Record RSSL Ltd (last 3 all play equipment), Fitzpatrick Woolmer (notice boards) and Urbanscape (street furniture).

### **VISITORS' QUESTIONS**

Mr Challis said that encroachment onto the Recreation Ground had gone on for time immemorial but that the council should be firm. His feeling was that any encroachment should be removed.

*Dr Oakley agreed. Dr Grindley said that the council needed to be stricter about the access agreement. It was agreed that Dr McKeown would organise a document setting out the council's position. The clerk was asked to let Dr McKeown have the original letter to residents and to consult CALC about the possibility of charging a peppercorn rent.*

Mr Hockley, referring to the CCC letter re Local Council lamps (item 1, Correspondence list) offered to help checking these against the CCC list.

*Dr Oakley thanked Mr Hockley for this very helpful offer.*

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Dr Oakley reported that the clerk had been receiving a lot of unwelcome e-mails since her e-mail address had been included on the village website (without her permission). It was agreed that there was no need for either the clerk's or councillors' e-mail addresses to be included on the website and it was agreed that the clerk should ask Dr Sanderson to remove them.

### **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

It was confirmed that the next meeting would be held on **Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> January 2008** at **7.45pm** in the **Meeting Room** of the **Village Hall**.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.45pm.