

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FOXTON PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY, 3rd MARCH 2014 AT 7.45 p.m.

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| <u>PRESENT</u> | Dr Oakley, Dr Grindley, Mr Bore, Mr Barnes, Mr Elliott, Mrs Macintyre, Mrs McFadzean and Mr Sutton |
| | County Councillor Susan van de Ven |
| <u>IN ATTENDANCE</u> | 2 members of the public |
| <u>APOLOGIES</u> | Mr McCreery |

Dr Oakley welcomed all to the meeting.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Two amendments were needed on page 81, under “Level Crossing Closure”:

- The end of the last sentence, 1st paragraph should read “---chocolates for the post lady and post man.”
- First sentence, 2nd paragraph should read “---which would bring the printing costs, hire of the Village Hall and gift of chocolates to £150.

Dr Oakley proposed that, with these amendments, the Minutes of the previous Meeting, held on Monday, 2nd February 2014 be signed as a true record. Mrs Macintyre seconded the proposal and all were agreed.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Presentation re Affordable Housing in Fowlmere Road

Mr Bore said that when he had suggested the council purchase a ransom strip of land adjacent to the proposed development, he had not meant that the land should be purchased from the owner of the site but that the district council might allow a ransom strip. Alternatively, the designated play area could be moved to the turning area for vehicles. It was agreed that the council would contact Schulyer Newstead, SCDC Head of Housing Strategy and Development.

Mr Barnes said that maybe there should be a hedge at the back of the proposed development.

LEVEL CROSSING CLOSURE

Dr Oakley reported as follows:

He said that the parish council had mounted an exhibition for residents, from the 17th to the 21st of February, which detailed the outcome of a Network Rail Feasibility Study for the closure of the level crossing. At the same time a leaflet was sent to every household giving some information on the study, detailing the times of the exhibition and asking for a response to two questions viz. “All things considered are you in favour of the closure of Foxtan level crossing” and, “If closure were to go ahead would you wish for the bypass crossing of the railway line to be a bridge or an underpass”. Dr Oakley said that a full report on the outcome of the exhibition and survey incorporating comments from residents and other local villages was in preparation, so that his report tonight was just a preliminary summary.

The exhibition was attended by 207 people of whom 167 were Foxtan residents and 40 were from neighbouring villages. The overall turnout was 17.5% of those on the Electoral Roll but, if this was broken down street-by-street, then, as expected, more residents came from streets adjacent to the level crossing i.e. Barrington Road (56%) and Cambridge Road (55%). From other areas of Foxtan turnout was lower and varied from 6% (Fowlmere Road and Hillfield) to 24% (West Hill Road and Shepreth Road). Interestingly, only 12% of Station Road residents came to the exhibition. A clear majority of those who attended were in favour of the crossing being closed. However, four things came over as major concerns. These were:

- Accessing the bypass at each end must be straightforward and safe
- Only roundabouts, with or without traffic lights, would be acceptable
- Safe pedestrian and cycle access to Barrington Road must be maintained
- The environmental impact of the rail crossing, be it bridge or underpass, must be minimised.

Accessing the Station platforms would be best served by an underpass and not a bridge and lift as proposed in the study. All attendees without exception were concerned with the access to the bypass and this view had been reinforced by comments received from the survey. It was also clear when speaking to people that, without appropriate access, any proposal for a bypass would lose the support of local residents.

Of the 155 residents who responded to the survey, the response was very much in favour (75%) of closing the level crossing. In terms of street-by-street analysis all those residents of Barrington Road who responded were against closure whereas in all other streets more were in favour of closure, with 100% of those furthest from the crossing in Fowlmere Road, Hillfield and maybe surprisingly, Cambridge Road, being in favour of closure. When it came to the question of whether or not there should be a bridge or an underpass the majority, but not a large one (57%), of those in favour of closure wanted to see an underpass. This slight majority was pretty consistent throughout the village but was most evident in Station Road where 65% were in favour of an underpass. Not surprisingly all those who said “No” to the closure voted in favour of an underpass over a bridge when asked to choose. Taken together, therefore, 62% of residents wanted to see an underpass.

Although the exhibition was well attended and there had been a significant number of replies to the council's survey, the actual level of turnout and response was disappointingly low (less than 20% of the electorate). Dr Oakley said he could only conclude that, although this was a major infrastructure project having a lasting effect on the village and its environs, most residents were, at best, ambivalent about it. He said he would also assume that, if there were a very strong feeling against the closure, this would have been reflected in the survey response and at the exhibition. All in all, therefore he thought it could be safely concluded that most people living in Foxton were in favour of closure of the level crossing. Even though the majority were in favour of closure there were major caveats, the main one of which was the provision of safe and straightforward access to any bypass, without action on which it was clear that support for closure would drop off to a large extent. The project board would allow the council direct representation at an early stage and Dr Oakley said he would recommend that the council's stance, based entirely on its public consultation, should be as follows, but with caveats:

- The council supports the closure of the level crossing
- The council must insist on roundabouts at either end of the bypass
- The council would prefer an underpass to a bridge
- The council would require the best practice minimisation of any environmental impact
- The council would need safe pedestrian and cycle access to Barrington Road
- The council does not think a lift and bridge would be feasible to access Station platforms - an underpass would be its preferred option

Finally, Dr Oakley said that it was clear that residents were very grateful to the council for mounting this exhibition giving them a chance to see what was going on and for allowing them to comment at this early stage. His thanks went to Mr Elliott who helped with the preparation of the exhibition and the survey and to all those Councillors who had helped with the manning of the exhibition.

VILLAGE INFRASTRUCTURE

Dr Oakley reported that, following the representation he had made to the County Council on the 20th January, he had received notification that the council's bid for funding, to allow for the reduction of the speed limit to 20 mph, had been unsuccessful. Foxton Parish Council had been placed on a reserve list so that, if for any reason funding did not go ahead for one of the preferred projects, it might well be considered. Dr Oakley said that the council would be reapplying later this year for next year's funding round.

Dr Oakley also said that there were numerous potholes throughout the village and its access roads. He believed the County Council had been informed.

PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE

Mr Elliott said he was proposing to move forward with the website and had started the process going for acquiring a gov.uk domain name. He had tried several times without success to contact Paul Grainger (SCDC) about adding a mapping facility.

REPORTS FROM THE WORKING PARTIES

RECREATION AND AMENITIES

Mrs Macintyre reported as follows:

Skate Park

Bendcrete had commenced work on the skate park on Tuesday, 4th February. The contractors had a bad start, as their track-laying lorry broke down on that day. In order for work to begin, Mr McCreery had given permission for the digger to travel across the unprotected Recreation Ground and fortunately this had done very little damage. The track had been laid the following day allowing lorries to travel up to the compound to remove the soil from the bike park.

Mrs Macintyre said there had been several issues during the past four weeks - some as a result of the recent appalling weather. Numerous visits to the site and talks with Bendcrete had resulted in a satisfactory outcome. Some additional railings around one end of the park had incurred an additional cost of £600. The Skate Park committee had agreed to do more fundraising to cover this.

Some modifications to the original plan had been needed but none that would affect the "ride experience".

Bendcrete expected to complete the park by 10th March at which point it would be inspected by an accredited Play Inspector. Mrs Macintyre said she had the safety signs ready for Mr Salmons to put up in the park.

Mrs Macintyre reported that there had been considerable damage to the Recreation Ground where vehicles had slipped off the track. Bendcrete planned to have the affected areas rotavated, raked and rolled and grass seed would be sown. She said that the ground would eventually recover.

Mrs Macintyre she would like to request the clerk to write a letter to the Pre School Play Group as soon as possible apologising for the fact that the group had been unable to access their Play garden, as Bendcrete had put their container and other equipment in front of the gates. She had spoken to the contractors who had offered to access the play area to get out any equipment needed.

Trees

Eastern Tree Surgery had been carrying out phase 1 of the work required as a result of the KASK report.

Half of the large Ash tree at the end of the Illingworth Way footpath had been removed. Great care had been taken to check for bats before the limbs and trunk were removed and there was no evidence of any bat activity. Two more Ash trees and one Horse Chestnut tree had been taken down from the boundaries of the Recreation Ground.

Mrs Macintyre also asked Eastern Tree Surgery to fell five further wind-damaged Prunus and an Elder tree, which had resulted in an additional cost of £320. These trees were all ivy-clad and had had their tops broken off during the strong winds about two weeks ago.

Mrs Macintyre reported that Picus tests would be carried out the next day on the remaining trunk of the large Ash and on the Hall Close Oak tree.

Mr Sutton suggested that a fence square off the triangular piece of land at the rear of the skate park and the land be transferred to the allotments. The work could be carried out by Mr Salmons. It was suggested that Bendcrete be asked to remove the fence from the remaining sides of the triangle.

Mention was made of the tremendous amount of work done by Jonathan Love in progressing the project and the clerk was requested to write a letter of thanks to all the members of the skate park committee.

Dr Oakley reported receiving an e-mail from Mr vanBochoven congratulating the council on the resurfacing of the gravel car park and offering to improve the verges. All were agreed to accept the offer.

Dr Grindley had been looking at the charges to the football clubs towards the cost of electricity and maintenance of the training lights. The previously agreed charges of £30 per month for the adult club and £60 per month for the junior club were based on estimates made in 2010 of electricity consumption and cost, plus estimated annual charges towards re-lamping and maintenance costs expected to be incurred on a 4 to 5 year cycle.

Overall there was a close match between estimated and incurred electricity consumption and cost, indicating that the charges passed onto the sports clubs were fair. It was proposed by Dr Grindley that the charges now due to be levied on the sports clubs for 2012/13 should be made on the same basis, which was agreed. Electricity charges were fixed for three years but would increase after this season.

Dr Grindley advised that use by the adult sport clubs had been reduced to prevent overuse. Mrs Macintyre said the junior club were playing matches on Saturdays on a pitch located on the training area and had stopped using the training lights. It was proposed and agreed that Dr Grindley should meet with the sports clubs to discuss future use and charges.

Mr Sutton asked whether, if the size of the lit area were increased, the clubs would use the facility more.

Dovecote Meadow

Mrs Macintyre said she had asked Eastern Tree Surgery to drop a load of the chipped tree remains at the car park entrance to the meadow. Mr and Mrs Macintyre and Mrs Cairns spread about a quarter of this pile onto the muddy footpath leading to the meadow. A large amount remained, which would be used over the next year or two.

Car Park

The Hardman Road car park had been resurfaced in the past week and was at last free from craters and puddles. It was good to see it being well used last Saturday when the children were playing football matches on the Recreation Ground.

Recreation Ground

The Recreation Ground was looking very worn, especially after being used last weekend for the matches. It was still not being used for training purposes.

Mr Salmons had still to repair the fence post by the Play Area.

The Kompan Play Area Inspection report had been received. All the deficiency findings were either low, or very low, risk. The group would ask Mr Salmons to do any necessary repair jobs.

FINANCE

Mr Sutton gave details of the Barclays Bank Accounts as follows:

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| Deposit Account | £16,806.64 |
| Current Account | £52.04 |
| 10-day Notice Account (This included interest of £19.14 applied 1/3/14) | £22,906.54 |

Mr Sutton proposed the following cheques for payment:

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| Foxtan Village Hall (hire of Meeting Room 6/1/14) | £15.50 |
| Unlimited Logos (2 exterior signs for skate park) | £138.00 |
| P Rooke (resurfacing gravel car park) | £1,866.00 |
| Eastern Tree Surgery (tree work on Recreation Ground) | £2,016.00 |
| L Elliott (reimbursement for gift to Post Office staff) | £10.00 |
| D Salmons (Village Warden duties, Jan/Feb plus extra work) | £242.50 |
| J E Burns (salary March) | £312.84 |
| J E Burns (expenses January and February) | £49.22 |

To cover these payments, Mr Sutton proposed transferring £2,784 from the Deposit Account to the Current Account and a further £1,866 from the Recreation Ground Trust (RGT) Current Account to the FPC Current Account.

Dr Oakley seconded both proposals and all were agreed that these payments, totalling £4,650.06 be made and the necessary transfers made. The clerk was asked to defer payment to P Rooke until notified by Mr Sutton that the transfer from RGT had been made.

PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

Dr Grindley reported as follows:

Planning applications considered at the meeting:

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| Mr Gary Cannon | Application No. S/0234/14/FL for erection of side extension and porch at 67 Station Road Approved |
| Mr and Mrs Smith | Application No. S/0369/14/FL for two front bay windows at 29 Fowlmere Road Approved |

Planning permission granted:

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| Mr and Mrs Mahoney | Application No. S/2709/13/FL |
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Four conditions including that the first floor window on the rear elevation should be fitted with obscure glass

Dr Grindley reported that a further application (S/2624/13/DC) had been received, for information only. This related to the approved application (S/0173/12/FL for a development of 7 dwellings off High Street and was for approval of details in respect of:

Condition 3 (external materials), Condition 4 (hard and soft landscaping), Condition 6 (foul water drainage), Condition 7 (surface water drainage), Condition 13, (boundary treatment, Condition 14, (finished floor levels), Condition 15 (external lighting) and condition 19 (temporary parking)

A letter also relating to this development had been received proposing the street name “Bury Farm” for the site.

There was some discussion about the proposed street name, which councillors felt would be confusing bearing in mind the proximity of Bury Farm and “The Bury” itself. The clerk was asked to write saying that the council considered the proposed street name confusing and that the Planning Committee would consider alternative names.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT

Dr van de Ven reported as follows:

MAYD:

The MAYD committee had met last month and agreed unanimously that a youth club was essential for the Melbourn area. Groundwork’s offer (for running the club) had been discussed with a number of queries arising. The committee would meet with Groundwork later this month to discuss details.

Connecting Cambridgeshire:

Dr van de Ven asked that if anyone who was not hooked up to Virgin Media, and had attempted unsuccessfully to do so via the channel she had circulated earlier, they would please not give up – the County Council team had now ascertained that it was possible but would involve a cost and could be pursued.

A10 Cycle path:

The telephone pole that was obstructing the path had been removed, and a team of people from the A10 Corridor Cycling Campaign would be working, with specialist advice, to re-seed the verges to a high standard - probably over the third weekend of March.

Community Transport and subsidised transport cuts:

The debate at the County Council’s budget meeting on the long-term implications of losing community transport and subsidised bus services had resulted in a kind of reprieve in that a pot of £500K was identified for “public transport,” the details of which were to be worked out by a cross-party group of councillors. Funding for a small number of other services aimed at supporting vulnerable people were also added to the late amendment. All of this was a result of a constructive cross-party

pre-budget discussion that had taken place over a period of two to three months. Dr van de Ven said community transport would not survive without grant funding.

A meeting was to be held at Cemex, but Dr van de Ven would not be able to attend. Mr Bore said he would be going to the meeting.

Dr van de Ven reported that, from April, there would be a parking charge of £1 at the Park and Ride site at Trumpington. Mr Bore asked whether bus passes would be affected. Dr van de Ven said she understood not. Mr Sutton asked why the offer from Stagecoach to take over the running of the site had not been taken up. Dr van de Ven said that the figures did not quite stack up. Mr Sutton pointed out that the parking charge could escalate.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

There was no District Councillor's report.

POLICE LIAISON REPORT

Mr Barnes said that, at the last Police Liaison meeting, the new Inspector had stated that he would be concentrating on crime fighting with parking and speeding issues taking a lesser amount of time. Regularly reported problems would still, however, be investigated.

Recent offences under investigation by the police were:

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|----------------|--------------------------------|
| Hall Close | Vehicle crime incident |
| Hillfield | Incident involving violence |
| Mortimers Lane | Anti-social behaviour incident |

The police were continuing their project for alerting householders to security deficiencies at their properties.

RECREATION GROUND TRUST REPORT

Mrs McFadzean said that Trustees had met on 3rd February and would meet again for a very brief meeting immediately after the present council meeting to approve the transfer of funds to the parish council as mentioned in the Finance Report.

CORRESPONDENCE

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

- 1) Letter dated 8th January from Foxtan Gardens Association (FGA) proposing to commemorate the centenary of the First World War by enhancing the area around the War Memorial with an improved permanent display of planters and plants and seeking the council's approval.

Approved by council. The clerk was asked to write to FGA welcoming its offer but asking about proposals for maintenance.

- 2) Play Area Inspection Report from Kompan. (*Passed to RM*)
- 3) Letter dated 10th February from Npower re prices for extended electricity contract (termination, if desired, in writing before 14th March): booklets

included and a further letter dated 18th February asking for a meter reading and to give a date and contact details for an inspector to make a visual check of the metering equipment.

- 4) Various e-mails from CAPALC.
- 5) Publicity material from Wicksteed Playscapes and Barcham Trees.

VISITORS' QUESTIONS

Mr and Mrs Mycroft had attended the meeting to discuss the proposed closure of the level crossing.

Dr Oakley said the council would do its best for the Barrington Road residents who would be most affected by the closure.

Mr Mycroft then gave some detailed figures comparing the relative costs of an overbridge and an underpass over an extended period.

Dr Oakley said the information was very interesting and could be useful in the council's representations to the project board. It was agreed that Mr Mycroft would pass on his research figures to the council.

Mr Mycroft said that a good impression could be gained of the height, noise and light pollution from an overbridge at the point where the M11 crosses the road at Little Shelford.

Dr van de Ven said there was a very receptive team at Network Rail, which would welcome as much local information as possible.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There had been complaints about mud on Hardman Road caused by contractors vehicles for the skate park construction.

The clerk had received a request from Shepreth Parish Council for information about obtaining a defibrillator and she asked for an update on the council's own efforts to obtain one. It was suggested that she contact Mr Kohler.

It was agreed that the clerk should write to Mrs Abbotts to thank her for the gift of two aerial views of Foxton that would be displayed in the council office.

Dr Oakley had received a letter from South Cambridgeshire District Council asking whether the council would like to register the White Horse Inn as a village asset. It was agreed that the parish council should do this and complete the forms supplied.

Mr Sutton said that there was a new H M Revenue and Customs system for reporting tax (Real Time Information). The clerk's final tax return was due this month and he would be checking the figures. He had found the new system to be very unsatisfactory.

Mrs Macintyre said that when trees bordering Illingworth Way were taken down, Mr Salmons had taken the wood away, as was normal practice. However, some Illingworth Way residents had felt aggrieved that they had not been offered the wood. It was felt that the council would not change its instructions to Mr Salmons, but once he had the wood, it would be up to him how he disposed of it.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was confirmed that this would be held on **Monday, 7th April 2014 at 7.45pm** in the **Village Hall Meeting Room**.

The **Annual Parish Meeting** would be held on **Tuesday, 29th April 2014 at 7.45pm** in the **Village Hall Meeting Room** and the **Annual General Meeting** would be held on **Monday, 12th May 2014 at 7.45pm** in the **Village Hall Meeting Room**.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.15pm.