

MINUTES OF THE **MEETING OF FOWLMERE PARISH COUNCIL** HELD  
IN THE SCHOOL ROOM, UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, CHAPEL LANE  
**15<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2011 AT 7.30 PM**

PRESENT: Cllr D Roberts (Chairman), Cllr J Bottrill, Cllr P Flynn, Cllr E O'Regan, Cllr J Peacock, Cllr M Sunderland, Cllr Wragg and Mrs J Wright (Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE: County Councillor Tim Stone and later, Mr N Flynn, resident

		<b>Actions</b>
1.	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:</b> Apologies were received from Cllr N Webb</p>	
2.	<p><b>DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS:</b> No items were declared.</p>	
3.	<p><b>MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF 18<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2011:</b> The minutes were agreed and signed as a true record.</p>	
4.	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING:</b> There were no matters arising which were not covered in the agenda.</p> <p>Cllr Roberts reported that the Remembrance service went very smoothly in the village and was very well attended.</p>	
5.	<p><b>COUNTY COUNCIL AFFAIRS:</b> Cllr Stone circulated the following report:</p> <p><b>“Buses</b> <i>County officers have been told that they must get a franchise up and running locally by 5<sup>th</sup> December. I am very unhappy with the way are being developed so far and this morning met senior officers to help resolve some of the issues.</i></p> <p><i>The County’s franchise proposals are designed to attract budding entrepreneurs. The County nevertheless wishes to control fares. The idea is that the County will give a 12 seat minibus to an entrepreneur who, from next February, will pick up pupils with Special Educational needs and transport them to and from the Granta School at Linton. This would occupy the minibus from 7.00 to 9.30 in the morning and from 3.30 to 6.30 in the evening. Before and after these times in the early morning and later evening the franchisee might like to take people to and from Whittlesford station. During the middle of the day possible routes would be to supermarkets or, say, Trumpington Park &amp; Ride if that can be arranged. In the very late evening the minibus could be used for bringing people back from Cambridge.</i></p> <p><i>One difficulty is that the proposed franchise cannot replicate a commercial service It is illegal to have a subsidised bus route competing with a commercial one. Having a subsidised transport franchise competing with a subsidised bus route would make a lawyer’s Christmas. So whatever is proposed is not something that could take over the 31 route if and when Meridian decide to pull out.</i></p> <p><i>I remain very much in favour of widening and improving public transport locally and shall continue to work with anyone on a solution which stands a chance of being beneficial and durable.</i></p> <p><i>Another issue is that this is all supposed to be going on with consultation with parish councils.</i></p>	

No parish council had been contacted until the week message last week. I found it less than helpful and have therefore arranged a meeting at the Whittlesford Highways depot at 9.30 am on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November so that County Officers can explain themselves. I have sent your clerk an invitation for one of your parish councillors to attend.

I have asked that the County to print a flyer which can be given to all the parish magazine editors in the seven villages concerned. It can then go out with the December issue of their magazines. This is not a public meeting and I have been told that the number of people using the room has to be restricted to no more than 16.

There will also be a public meeting on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December at Hinxton village hall. It would be nice if people could get there and home by bus. The start time has yet to be confirmed but it certainly won't be before it gets dark. I shall let you know as soon as I have details.

#### **Minor Traffic Improvements and Area Joint Committees**

The County has now cleared up the muddle around Traffic management Area Joint Committees and Minor Highways Improvements – with one exception which I shall mention later. The new rules are:

1. Every year there will be a single annual process by which, in each District, a decision is taken as to which minor highways improvements are to be done/funded.

2. Each scheme will cost no more than £10,000.

3. The bidder (eg a Parish Council) will be expected to pay 10% of the cost.

4a There will be a deadline (in November in 2011) for bids from Parish Councils and anyone else for some such improvement to be done in their patch.

4b In January, for each District, a group of 4-6 county members from that district will meet in public (with officer support) to assess the bids from their district and will choose how to allocate the up-to-£50k earmarked per District.

5 Political groups will appoint members to the panels of 4-6 "on a proportionate representative basis for that district." Local district and parish councillors would be consulted on the bids relevant to them.

6 There needs to be more detail around timetable etc. The report merely says:

"Bids would be invited in November, with Member panels sitting in early January. Parish councils or other bidders could set their precept/budget to reflect their contribution to the successful bid. The opportunity to borrow funds from the council and repay over a period of time could also be highlighted at this time."

The exception is that if bids are to be invited in November, then what has happened this year? I am still looking for a definitive answer and shall report back as soon as I have one.

#### **Superfast Broadband**

	<p><i>Cambridgeshire County Council is intending to borrow up to £20 million to help install superfast broadband across the county. This will be helped by government grants and the development plans of broadband providers.</i></p> <p><i>In our part of the county there are many people who work from home. They are the key to the knowledge-based economy. Erratic broadband speeds hamper their work. In one village next door houses may have quite different broadband speeds. And the farther a computer is from the exchange in general the lower the speed. As I understand it, the Fowlmere exchange offers pretty good broadband speeds already.</i></p> <p><i>The County will have to decide where to start with spending its broadband money. It is reasonable to expect that it will go first to those places that BT regard as of a low priority.</i></p> <p><i>In order to gather evidence to show that our need is important, I am collecting details of the real speeds which people are getting. I should be very glad to receive them at <a href="mailto:timothy.stone1@virgin.net">timothy.stone1@virgin.net</a>.</i></p> <p><i>The most reliable source of information is at <a href="http://speedtester.bt.com/">http://speedtester.bt.com/</a>. There are four figures of importance: The actual (download) speed when you test, the download and upload speeds and the IP Profile, which is the download limit which BT has set for your computer. It is the actual download speed in which I am most interested.</i></p> <p><b>Street Lighting</b></p> <p><i>Excellent news from the District Council on taking over Parish Council lights. At last week's In Your Patch meeting at Shire Hall it was quite clear that County officers were well out of touch and I vigorously seconded the proposal of the District's responsible Cabinet member that the item should not be discussed. However if there are any further concerns you may have about Balfour Beatty and maintenance I shall be glad to take them up.</i></p> <p><b>Protected Road Verges</b></p> <p><i>I have e-mailed all parish councils with Protected Road Verges within their boundaries to ask if they would be interested in setting up a consortium to have their Protected Road Verges cut according to the protocol which already exists between the County and the Wildlife Trust. The cost would be pro rated according to the length of the verges but by joining together the theory is that a better price can be achieved than if all parishes go it alone."</i></p>	
6.	<p><b>UPDATE ON THE VILLAGE HALL:</b> Cllr Flynn reported that fundraising is still going well and they are looking for further funding from SCDC which is to be decided this month.</p>	
7.	<p><b>PLANNING COMMITTEE</b> An appeal against the planning decision for The Nurseries (The Way) has been submitted. Any correspondence previously sent from the Parish Council from before will be included so there is no need to submit anything additional.</p> <p><b>The Meeting was then opened to the members of the public and then closed.</b></p>	
8.	<p><b>BURIAL BOARD:</b> The Clerk reported on her meeting with Roz Richardson from SCDC where she advised keeping to primarily lime trees (lime eucloria), but spacing them out more along the boundary.</p>	

	<p>She recommended Bartrams in Ely, container grown at 2-3 m in height and should grow about 8m in a ten year period. They have a high canopy which is what is needed. Could also include a pine or two and possibly yew. Roz also advised against burials at the front of the existing cemetery but at some point digging some test holes to see if a minimal amount of half plots could be made available for cremated remains – the tree roots are the issue.</p>	
9.	<p><b>TREES, GRASS AND HEDGES:</b>  The diseased horse-chestnut trees have been removed from The Butts, the Clerk to contact Chris Wall about replacement trees – not silver bitches but possibly beech, oak or hornbeam, maybe needing fewer than 4 but they have a longer life.</p> <p>Cllr Roberts to speak to Mr Bates about planting a tree as a commemoration of his service to the Parish Council - to be agreed in December and plant in January.</p> <p>The Clerk reported that the HLS agreement has been successful for the Moat and she will pass the paperwork to Mr Bates.</p> <p>The Clerk has had one quote in for surveying the village trees and will seek another Bench replacement from the Community Chest. The decision for the one behind Ison's Close is fine but the 2<sup>nd</sup> bench needs an alternative location, the green area on the rhs when leaving the village of Cambridge Road was suggested. The PC needs to ask the County Council who own the grass verge – the Clerk to contact Tim Stone.</p> <p>A request has been made for a dog bin at the end of Manor Farm (a green coloured one). The Clerk to contact Martin Sheldrick and progress.</p> <p>A request for tree work had come in from 17 Ryecroft Lane but there was some doubt as to what land the tree was on. Cllr O'Regan offered to take a look</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Cllr Roberts</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Cllr O'Regan</p>
10.	<p><b>FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES:</b>  <b>Minutes from the Finance Meeting dated 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011</b>  Minutes of the meeting of <b>Fowlmere Parish Council Finance and General Purposes Committee</b> held in the Dorothy Pluck Room, St Mary's Church, Fowlmere, Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011 at 7:30pm.</p> <p><b>Present:</b> Cllr O'Regan (Chair), Cllr J Bottrill, Cllr P Flynn, Cllr J Peacock, Cllr D Roberts, Cllr N Webb and Mrs J Wright (Clerk).</p> <p><b>1. Apologies for absence</b>  Apologies were received from Cllr M Sunderland and Cllr L Wragg</p> <p><b>2. Minutes of previous meeting/Matters Arising</b>  The previous minutes of 19<sup>th</sup> July 2011 had already been agreed and signed at the last PC meeting.</p> <p><b>3. Review of income and expenditure</b>  <b>a) Street Lighting (incl school lighting)</b>  The Clerk updated the Council on the reversal of the contract for the street lighting, it is now reverting back to SCDC. The energy bill will come in next month and is predicted to be in the region of £900</p> <p>School street lighting – This follows a request from the school about the possibility of a street light outside the school. It was discussed but agreed to be cost prohibitive. Perhaps a sensor light could be used on the outside of the school. Cllr Flynn to report</p>	

to the Governors

#### 4. Precept

a) **New Bus Shelter**

It was suggested to put some money aside for this project - £500 as a minimum per year.

The precept for 2012-2013 has been suggested with a 3% increase, plus the additional cost for the protected verges and the bus shelter.

#### 5. Trees, Grass and Hedges

a) **Ryecroft Lane / Moat trees**

These are too high for Chris Wall to tackle, Clerk to speak to Michael Bates for an update and seek a quote if necessary.

Overhanging hedge in Ryecroft Lane – Clerk to see and ask them to cut back if necessary.

b) **Protected Verges**

The cost per year will be £525 - £1050 depending on whether we need 1 or 2 cuts per year.

c) **New Benches (via Community Chest)**

Chris Wall has suggested two areas for benches. Clerk to check that the neighbours are happy with this at the proposed locations and reply back to Chris Wall

Clerk to contact SCDC (Planning) re road sign being perished at the end of Chapel Lane.

#### 6. Future Projects

a) **Play Equipment.**

Cllr Roberts has heard the PC has been recommended to get £1,100 towards the new roundabout. Clerk to order, assuming it takes longer than 2 weeks. Cllr's to check positioning on The Butts.

b) **Storage at the Chapel**

Ask Dave Salmons for a quote and one other, to build some shelving at the rear of the chapel.

#### 7. Other Matters

a) **Friendship Club Donation**

The PC agreed to pay a further £250 donation this November.

b) **Post Box at Shop and Parish Notice Board**

Clerk to find out what are the arrangements for the Post Box at the old shop.

Clerk to mention to Chris Wall about replacing some trees on The Butts to replace the removed and diseased horse chestnuts.

Daffodil Bulbs have been spread throughout the village.

	<p>There were no other matters and the meeting closed at 8:15pm.</p> <p><b>8. Date of next meeting</b></p> <p>a) The date of the next Finance Meeting is to be in January 2012, Clerk to check the timings of the precept for 2012-2013. Clerk to mention in FATN the ideas for spend in the village.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*****</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting were agreed and signed accordingly.</p> <p>The meeting to decide funding for the roundabout at SCDC is on 17<sup>th</sup> November</p> <p>Cllr Stone advised 10% precept for road repairs is necessary. Footpaths should be reported anyway. Cllr Bottrill asked about the possibility of updating the speeding signs, which could be considered next year 2013-14.</p> <p>The electricity is still working at the Chapel and has been checked recently.</p>	
11.	<p><b>CORRESPONDENCE:</b></p> <p>Mr Flynn attended the meeting after the public section of the meeting but Cllr Roberts was able to update him that she left a phone message with Mr Flynn's key worker to say she is willing to talk to his neighbours about the situation. The key worker hasn't replied and this needs to happen before any talks can progress.</p> <p>Cllr Roberts read out the letter from an applicant for the remaining post on the Parish Council. The Councillors agreed a short meeting on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December to hold an informal interview (7:15pm).</p>	
12.	<p><b>ACTION LIST UPDATE:</b></p> <p>The Action List was updated accordingly</p> <p>The training meeting that two councillors attended was very useful and there was a further session for Cllr's Flynn, O'Regan and Peacock in a fortnight at Litlington PC.</p>	
13.	<p><b>OTHER MATTERS:</b></p> <p><b>a) Queen's Jubilee</b></p> <p>It was agreed that the Clerk put an invitation for ideas into the FATN re the Queen's Jubilee celebrations, stating there would be a small amount of funding available from the PC.</p> <p>A local resident complained about the lateness and extent of the fireworks at the Village Hall on Bonfire night. It was agreed that this was presumably a one-off but for the person concerned to speak to the Village Hall if they wished.</p> <p>Clerk to chase up the re-engraving of the war grave at the cemetery with the War Commission</p> <p>The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December at the URC</p> <p>The meeting closed at 9:10pm</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>