

MINUTES OF THE **MEETING OF FOWLMERE PARISH COUNCIL** HELD
IN THE SCHOOL ROOM, UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, CHAPEL LANE
14TH DECEMBER 2010 AT 7.30 PM

PRESENT: Cllr D Roberts (Chairman), Cllr A Eades, Cllr O'Regan, Cllr N Webb, Cllr L Wragg, Mrs J Wright (Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr Tim Stone.

		Actions
1.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Apologies were received from Cllr Bates, Cllr Peacock and Cllr Sunderland.</p>	
2.	<p>DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS: No items were declared.</p>	
3.	<p>COUNTY COUNCIL AFFAIRS: Cllr Stone gave the following report:</p> <p><i>“Bus subsidies</i> <i>As the County gets into budget setting it is trying desperately to save services to vulnerable members of society. Everything else is being questioned.</i></p> <p><i>One area being examined is expenditure on bus subsidies. The 31 costs a gross £96,304.10 this financial year. That figure will be substantially reduced because the County receives all the fare income. Last year that came to £22,620.91. But we are still looking at a net cost of well over £70,000.</i></p> <p><i>The County hasn't decided by how much it hopes to prune bus subsidies. It could be a percentage or a total cut. Because the 31 travels through such a large number of parishes it could be that the cost per parish of replacing the subsidy could at a stretch be affordable. If this is solution adopted then there are a number of further questions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>How to divide the cost equitably amongst the parishes</i> ◆ <i>What happens if a parish rejects the idea of giving any subsidy?</i> ◆ <i>When does the County expect to change the subsidy regime?</i> <p><i>We shall soon know more about the County's thinking after yesterday's publication of the Localism Bill and details of the amounts local authorities are to receive from Westminster.</i></p> <p><i>We may then need to convene a meeting of the County, Meridian and the affected parishes to see where we go from here.</i></p> <p><i>Streetlights</i> <i>The County Council has now written to parishes about ex District Council streetlights. What they have failed to do is give an indication of the price of maintenance. I raised this in Full Council last Tuesday but clearly the Cabinet member responsible hadn't a clue.</i></p> <p><i>Talking to officers on the subject, it seems that the question is quite complicated. First of all the maintenance rules have changed and now has to include structural</i></p>	

testing (remember tombstone topple meters?). Also the County says its own maintenance charges are based on the County's marginal cost. So any outside contractor is almost certain to be more expensive.

It is unlikely that a definite set of figures will be available until March or April 2011. Meanwhile a meeting took place with Balfour Beatty in London and I have asked that the predicament of parish councils be brought to their attention

Parish Precepts

Parishes have received a communication from the County's Chief Executive in which he drops a fairly heavy hint that parishes might like to take the opportunity to increase precepts to give them the opportunity to replace some of the County's spending. Apparently the Localism Bill will still allow parishes to increase precepts without having to go to referendum. In future years they may not have the same flexibility. Some parishes are apparently considering setting up a specific fund to allow them to implement some of the wish lists contained in parish plans.

Traffic Regulation Orders

Parishes are aware that the major cost of changing speed limits or creating white lines is in the regulations surrounding publishing Traffic Regulation Orders in local newspapers. I thought that publishing on the County website combined with affected parishes posting details on parish noticeboards would achieve the same result at a much lower cost.

I now discover that Cambridgeshire is already lobbying with other authorities for a change in rules, though as yet their deliberations have not produced a firm proposal. One difficulty is that there is expected to be no space for a parliamentary bill before 2012 at the earliest.

This could well be of interest to parish councils because as things stand it is highly likely that there will be a further reduction in the budget for Cambridgeshire Highways. The burden of financing road improvements is likely to fall increasingly on parish councils.

Trees on the triangle

Mike Cooper has met Mr Townend of Burnaby. Mr Townend has agreed to move the two most prominent trees right back towards his boundary fence. Indeed he may already have done so. He has also agreed to maintain the trees to the satisfaction of County Highways and of the Parish Council.

Mike Cooper has left it at that and will continue to monitor growth of the trees to ensure that they do not compromise safety on the highway.

Melbourn Youth Club

A meeting is to be held at Melbourn parish office at 10 am on 26th January to discuss the future of Melbourn Youth Club. This is an "open access" youth club which has been very successful. It has a number of members from Fowlmere.

The County has decided that it can no longer support "open access" youth clubs, which offer facilities to all comers. In future it will concentrate only on those regarded

	<p>as “vulnerable.” Already Foxton, Meldreth and Shepreth Parish Councils have undertaken to help fund the youth club and I understand the subsidies range from £500 upward.</p> <p>The Royston and District Transport group have offered to use their minibuses to help get participants to and from the club.</p> <p>I very much hope that you will get an invitation to this event. And if you think you would like to support the youth club, remember to include the amount in your precept.</p> <p>The Localism Bill and so on</p> <p>The Localism bill has now been published and the County and District Councils are going through the small print to discover exactly what money they will be getting and what they can do with it. It looks as if the expected savings of 16% are about right, though there are all kinds of little bits like Integrated Transport Grant and a road maintenance grant which need to be taken into account.</p> <p>The Community Infrastructure Levy and the New Homes Bonus may have some effect in a fast growing county like Cambridgeshire. At least it would be fast growing if anyone built houses to satisfy demand. The County is concerned that the New Homes Bonus is expected to be divided 80% to District Councils and 20% to County Councils. This is raising hackles because it is road infrastructure, schools and so on which cost a lot of money. Collecting waste and planning by contrast costs much less. The County’s concerns are that money will be spent on “nice to have” things rather than essential things.</p> <p>It is likely that the County will propose that rather than set councils against each other, the better way would be to decide what is needed locally – and that would include input from parish councils – and then spend the money accordingly.</p> <p>It is also a bit odd that the electorate is filling the blogosphere with negative feedback, when only seven months ago they predominantly elected Tories who made no secret of wanting to implement The Big Society.”</p> <p>Cllr Roberts asked about the Guided Busway but there is no apparent end to the situation.</p> <p>Regarding parking on the Thriplow Triangle, there is a large white van parked and other cars right up to the edge of the junction at the give way. Cllr Stone to lead the PC down the path of getting yellow lines put in at that junction. David Lines from SCDC to contact the Clerk regarding starting the process.</p> <p>Cllr Roberts thanked Cllr Stone for attending all the meetings and for all his help and support throughout the year.</p>	Cllr Stone
4.	<p>MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF 16TH NOVEMBER 2010: The minutes were agreed and signed as a true record.</p>	
5.	<p>MATTERS ARISING: There were no matters arising not covered in the agenda.</p>	

6.	<p>UPDATE ON THE VILLAGE HALL:</p> <p>a) Village Hall Representative Clerk to seek clarification on what the trustees responsibilities are regarding the VH committee as long as duties are not neglected. The Clerk to go CPALC as the first port of call and keep the VH posted on the delay in getting back to them re a representative.</p>	Clerk
7.	<p>PLANNING COMMITTEE</p> <p>a) Minutes from 16th November 2010</p> <p>MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FOWLMERE PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD IN THE SCHOOL ROOM, URC, CHAPEL LANE, FOWLMERE ON 16TH NOVEMBER 2010 AT 7:15PM</p> <p>PRESENT: Cllr D Roberts (Chair), Cllr A Eades, Cllr J Peacock, Cllr O Regan, Cllr M Sunderland, Cllr N Webb and Mrs J Wright (Clerk)</p> <p>APOLOGIES: Cllr Bates, Cllr L Wragg</p> <p>1. Declarations of interest (if any) Before discussion, Cllr Roberts declared that if an application is later placed before South Cambridgeshire District Council she will approach any new information afresh.</p> <p>Cllr Roberts declared a personal and prejudicial interest for items 3 and 4. Regarding item 3, Cllr Roberts was a colleague with Mr Newby on the Parish Council until fairly recently and regarding item 4, Cllr Roberts' husband is employed in a swimming pool construction business.</p> <p>2. S/1074/10/F – For information only – Permission granted Extension 7 Savile Way, Fowlmere, Royston, Herts, SG8 7TU Mr Simon Brearley</p> <p>The Council noted the decision</p> <p>3. S/1781/10 External Staircase Ballacraine, Top Close, Fowlmere, Royston, Herts, SG8 7SP Mr Andrew Newby</p> <p>Cllr Roberts left the room at 19:17.</p> <p>Cllr Webb nominated Cllr Peacock to take over as Vice Chair of Planning and Cllr Eades seconded. All agreed.</p> <p>The Parish Council has no objections to this application as it provides more privacy for the bordering neighbours and makes the staircase safer in adverse weather conditions.</p> <p>4. S/1655/10 Construction of Outdoor Swimming Pool, with Paved Surround and 1m Brick Screen Wall</p>	

	<p>Fowlmere House, High Street, Fowlmere, Royston, SG8 7SU Dr George Follows</p> <p>The Parish Council has no objections to the application as it is not too near to a bordering property and is not raised above ground, other than the 1m screening wall.</p> <p>Cllr Roberts returned to the meeting at 19:25pm</p> <p>5. C/11/17/029/01 Tree Preservation Order 3 Butts View, Fowlmere, Royston, Herts, SG8 7SY Mrs Scrimshaw</p> <p>The Parish Council's view is that if the SCDC tree officers see that the report provided is correct, then the Parish Council would follow their guidance.</p> <p>6. Other Matters and Updates There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7:28pm</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*****</p> <p>b) AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE IN FOWLMERE As mentioned in Planning Meeting, the Clerk to speak to Darren Blake from Circle Anglia regarding an update and strongly suggest he chase the planning fees and then SCDC if the fees have been paid as we are letting the villagers expectations down.</p> <p>c) POSSIBLE BROADBAND UPGRADE IN THE VILLAGE Clerk to ask the PC Chairman from Thriplow for an update.</p> <p>The meeting was then opened to members of the public and press</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
8.	<p>BURIAL BOARD: It was agreed that people should be kindly asked to remove any wreaths from the Cemetery after Christmas as they have metal in so can't be put in the cemetery bin. Clerk to put up a poster to please put them in their own blue bins, in order to maintain the appearance of the cemetery.</p> <p>It was agreed to hold a meeting of the Burial Board soon in 2011.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>(Clerk)</p>
9.	<p>TREES, GRASS AND HEDGES: Gardencare have pruned the hedges opposite John's Close but it has made more work apparent. Clerk to ask Gardencare to quote for the work but if the work is undertaken it would be a one-off and not an annual work as Cllr Wragg has said the local residents have offered to maintain the work if it brought to a minimal level. Cllr Roberts to view.</p> <p>The dead trees in Dovehouse Close have now been removed by SCDC.</p> <p>Clerk to ask Cllr Bates regarding the screen of trees on the Ryecroft Lane edge of the Moat which were scheduled for removal / thinning.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk, Cllr Bates</p>
10.	<p>FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES: a) 2011-2012 PRECEPT UPDATE Cllr Roberts proposed the 2010-2011 Precept, Cllr Eades seconded and all agreed. The Clerk to send off to SCDC</p>	<p>Clerk</p>

	<p>b) EMERGENCY SPEND ALLOWANCE FOR CLERK The PC agreed that this is only in the event of an emergency when the Clerk can't get hold of any PC members and has to pay for something. A limit of £200 was set and would be immediately reimbursed by the PC.</p> <p>It was noted that the Over 60's club would need to approach the PC regarding any future donations to their Christmas lunch, in order to formalise where the money is paid to - it will need to be paid into a formal bank account, not a personal account and have a transparent audit trail.</p>	
11.	<p>CORRESPONDENCE: There were no matters arising from the Correspondence List.</p>	
12.	<p>ACTION LIST UPDATE: The action list was updated accordingly.</p>	
13.	<p>OTHER MATTERS:</p> <p>The next meeting will be a Finance Meeting at 7:00pm on Tuesday 18th January 2011, followed by the main PC meeting at 7:30pm on the same day at the URC in Chapel Lane.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 8:40pm</p>	