

The Meeting of the Parish Council was held virtually via the Zoom platform on Monday the 14th day of SEPTEMBER 2020 – commencing 7.30 pm

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Messrs Rayner (Chair), Lambert (Vice-Chair), Cock, Cole, Storey and Studd, Mrs Arnold, Mrs Bane and Mrs McGeeney. Also present 2 members of the public.

APOLOGIES: Apologies received from Mrs Peckham.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were no declarations of interest.

MINUTES: Minutes of the last meeting held Monday 13th July 2020 and Extraordinary meeting held Monday 27th July 2020 were taken as read, agreed and duly signed by the Chair.

PUBLIC SPEAKING: The meeting was suspended for 2 minutes to allow members of the public to speak.

MATTERS ARISING

1. RAF Feltwell – Chair said Community Relations had confirmed Sqn Leader was still in post and lack of contact from him may be due to poor IT. He was advised John Tillotson, Admin Assistant to the RAF Commander was another means of contact. Mr Storey said the greenery either side of the Blackdyke junction needs cutting back and Clerk said she had already notified Sqn Leader about this. Mr Lambert suggested the Clerk request Highways speak to the Base as this is encroaching too far onto the road. Clerk said the grass verge along Wilton Road also needed attention but she had been informed by the Base that this is Highways responsibility. Clerk will contact Highways.

2. SNT – Police Connect emails circulated, no reports regarding Feltwell.

3. Risk Assessment – Clerk said grills on the Changing Rooms have been replaced and painting of the see-saw has been completed. Due to lack of commitment from Playmaintain, the repairs to the suspended step and zip wire have been carried out by Fenland Leisure at a cost of £531.20 + VAT. The eroded handles on the Multiplay unit have been removed by Fenland Leisure who will quote to have these manufactured as parts for this equipment are only available from the USA and freight is expensive. Clerk said the Playing Field Committee will discuss quotations received for resurfacing under the climber and advise at the next meeting. Concrete under the teen shelter and basketball areas was inspected by the Chair, Mrs Bane, Mr Cole, Mrs Peckham and Mr Studd after their meeting with the football club on 17th July and it was felt these areas did not need to be resurfaced at the present time. MWM (Anglia) have scheduled the concrete slab for the first week of October. Mr Cole said he had looked at the hole in the skate park and asked if it could be repaired when the bench slab is laid. Mrs Bane said Canvas Spaces believe the hole is just wear and tear but they will inspect this when they are next in the area in 5-6 weeks' time. She said the Handyman will cut the protruding ducting back and bury it. Ash tree was removed 7th September by K C Peckham following concern regarding its dangerous condition at a price of £490 + VAT. Clerk said Fenland Leisure will carry out operational inspections quarterly, the first of which was done last week but report had not yet been received. Handyman has been carrying out visual weekly inspections and apart from the items mentioned above, everything else is in good order.

4. Balance Sheet – No queries.

5. Allotment Pest Control – No reports received for July, August or September. Clerk to chase.

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

6. NALC – NALC bulletins circulated as received.

7. Briefing sessions (i) Local Plan – Site Allocations & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (ii) 5 year land supply – Mr Storey said this is ongoing.

8. Ranger Visit – Clerk had received report and advised next visit will take place October. Clerk to request cutting of grass verges along Wilton Road neighbouring the Base and cutting back of Buddleia bush along Short Beck.

9. Parish Partnership Scheme – Bell Street bus shelter was installed w/c 31st August and High Street is scheduled this week. Deadline for 2021/2 Scheme is 4th December and Mrs Bane asked if a new trod along Paynes Lane could be considered. Chair requested any items be brought to the next meeting due to time constraints.

10. Locality Budget – Mrs Bane asked why this project had not been completed as the initial request was about two years ago. Mr Storey said he will chase this up with Andy Wallace as it was not acceptable and also asked the Clerk to contact him to ascertain exactly when this project was put on file.

11. Cllr Martin Storey Report – Mr Storey said meetings will continue virtually until well after Christmas and that some planning meetings are taking longer because of this. The public are welcome to view meetings whilst they take place by visiting the Borough Council website. There is a Hazardous Waste Amnesty at Thetford Recycling Centre 18/19/20th September.

12. Tree - Old Methwold Road – All work has been completed on trees at Old Methwold Road and Hill Street. Chair praised S P Landscapes for doing a good job and said the canopy on the tree at Old Methwold Road needs lifting. Clerk to obtain three prices.

13. Fence – Chair said the fence had been ordered but has no installation date as yet.

14. Doctors' Lease – Clerk said Lease had been received, signed and returned.

15. Memorial Garden – Chair said work will commence 22nd September. Mr Cole asked if the British flag would be removed before Winter but Chair said it had been agreed to fly it permanently following Mr Edwards' request at an earlier meeting however it will be removed whilst the Ensign flag is flown over the new few days to commemorate the Battle of Britain. Chair is awaiting clarification on whether the Remembrance Day service will go ahead.

16. Allotment Shed Break-Ins – Mr Cole said he had captured a car at the bottom of the allotments on 1st September at 12.30 am via his CCTV. Mr Storey said that following a review of tenants' responses, an allotment gate would not be installed as the majority voted against it.

17. Dog Bins – Clerk said bin is due to be received this week. MWM (Anglia) will lay the concrete base during the first week of October.

18. Online Banking – Chair had been unable to sort this due to Barclays restricting their calls to urgent cases only but will pursue.

19. Appointment of Internal Auditor – Clerk has had no response yet from the external auditors.

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

20. Potential Land Lease Opportunity – Chair asked whether this matter should be carried over until a physical meeting could be held or discussed at the present one. Mrs Bane felt it should be shelved under the current circumstances. Mr Cock said he had concerns over the company as they were registered under a business address in London and a lot of other businesses were registered under the same address. He said that if anything were to go wrong, the Parish Council would have to finance it. Mr Lambert had also researched the company and raised concerns regarding their financial stability. Mr Cock proposed rejecting the offer, Mrs Bane seconded, all in favour.

21. Feltwell United FC – See Item 30.

22. Discuss Strategy for Forwarding Capital Projects Named in the 2020/21 Budget – See Item 30.

23. Update on Feltwell Local Action Group – Mrs McGeeney said this is still working well and leaflet is being re-run in the Parish Magazine next month.

24. New Noticeboard for Playing Field – Clerk said this has been installed.

25. Playing Field Gates – Clerk to ask Handyman to look at metal gate.

26. Highways – Trench in Lodge Road has been filled. Footpath from Portal Close to Manor Park Estate is programmed to be totally resurfaced in the next financial year and Highways will look into clearing it in the meantime.

27. Changing Rooms Electricity Contract Renewal – Quotes were obtained from SSE (current provider), E.On and British Gas. Contract renewed with SSE who were the most competitive at an estimated yearly cost of £571.54 (agreed by all Councillors via email). Chair, Mr Lambert and Mrs Bane had signed the direct debit agreement in order for this to be set up.

28. Clothing Bags – Clerk said clothing bank is now being emptied.

29. Bell Street Bin – Clerk to obtain prices for a new bin. Mr Cole said it would be nice if this could match the new bin being installed at Addisons Close.

30. Matters Arising from Extraordinary Meeting held 27th July 2020 – **Football Club Request for Pitch Movement and Storage of New Goals:** S P Landscapes removed the tree beside the cub hut 22nd August as agreed. Chair said he would like to plant two new trees to replace those recently removed and asked for some ideas regarding location and species. Mr Lambert felt that they should be planted in the allotment hedges rather than the playing field where they may become costly to maintain in future years. Mrs Bane said the Playing Field Committee were meeting soon and would discuss this matter and report at the next meeting. **Discuss Strategy for Forwarding Capital Projects Named in the 2020/21 Budget:** Clerk said Highways advised speaking to the solicitor regarding the legal process of claiming ownership of Falcon Road alleyway and ascertaining costs involved. Mr Lambert proposed Clerk contact solicitor, Mrs Bane seconded, all in favour. **Barratt's Lane:** Mrs Arnold said rubbish is still being dumped here and Mr Cock had kindly agreed to assist in removing some of it when harvest is finished.

31. Small Business Grant – Clerk said application was successful and £10,000 had been received. Mrs Bane felt £1500-£2000 should be spent on maintenance to the Changing Rooms, i.e. painting and installing hand sanitiser stations, and the rest on new play equipment. She said Mrs Peckham, although absent, was also in support of this. Mr Cock was also in favour of this.

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

Mr Lambert felt costs for maintenance should come from general expenditure and that the entire £10,000 should be spent on play equipment. Mr Studd said that if there were no stipulations on where the money should be spent then he was in agreement and suggested netting be purchased for the perimeter of the field to keep footballs out of neighbouring residents' gardens. Mr Cole believed money should go towards rectifying all defective items on the play equipment as highlighted in the annual inspection report and although Mr Lambert said he could understand why, he believed it should only be spent on items not going to be replaced unless they were dangerous to use. Chair proposed ring-fencing £10,000 grant to be spent on the playing field, Mr Cock seconded, all in favour. Mrs Bane said the Playing Field Committee would look at where the money could be spent and report back at the next meeting.

32. Signs for Munsons Lane – Email received from resident of St Nicholas Drive asking if official 'Munsons Lane' signs could be displayed at Hythe Road and St Nicholas Drive entrances to Munsons Lane as a resident had put up a sign proclaiming the upper part as 'Piggy Lane'. Mr Cock said he couldn't see a problem in putting up a 'Munsons Lane' sign. Mr Lambert felt the 'Piggy Lane' sign was doing no harm and would rather see the cost of putting up a 'Munsons Lane' sign, on a lane which is only used by allotment holders and landowners either side, spent somewhere else. Mr Cole agreed. Mr Lambert proposed allowing the resident to leave the 'Piggy Lane' sign in situ and not purchasing a 'Munsons Lane' sign, Mrs Arnold seconded, all in favour.

33. Weight Restrictions and 'No Right Turn' from Wissington Factory – An email received from a resident had been circulated prior to the meeting and during Public Speaking, the resident reiterated her concerns regarding the amount and speed of sugar beet lorries driving through the village and urged measures be put in place to prevent an accident occurring. Clerk read out Highways response: *'we would not put weight restrictions on a major route. There are also the impacts of what this would cause to consider such as increased pollution from traffic having to travel further, increased pressure/traffic volumes on other areas of the network and impacts on other villages if traffic there increases from having to bypass Feltwell (Weeting/Hockwold/Methwold etc). Traffic restrictions can be expensive given the legal costs involved (as you are legally having to restrict a member of the public's lawful right to use the highway) and signing involved etc and can still not succeed if there are too many objections (and upfront costs would be lost)'*. Mr Storey invited the resident to respond to this and she said she felt there was a more suitable road for this traffic turning left from Wissington factory and that the lorries are using Feltwell as a short-cut. Mr Lambert said he appreciated her concerns but most sugar beet lorries in Feltwell are generated by local farmers transporting beet to and from the village, some use the Southery Road but most choose not to because of the condition of the road. Mr Cock said Feltwell farmers generate several hundreds of lorries throughout the sugar beet season and others come from Lakenheath and use the Southery road. He said lorry drivers are key workers and are a lifeline for the sugar industry which has been here since the 1930's. Mr Studd asked if the Council could write to Wissington factory asking them to remind their suppliers of the safe use of the highway. Mr Storey said Southery have a voluntary 20mph speed limit in force which the Parish Council managed to get in place due to the vast volume of traffic through the village 24 hours a day. The Chair invited the resident to respond and she said that a 'no right turn' from the Wissington factory would help Southery also and weight restrictions with 'access only' for tractors would be better for Feltwell as tractors are easier to hear and see. She said the lorries are not safe and are of grave concern to her. Mr Cock asked her to bear in mind that sugar beet is also hauled from Ely, Newark etc and they would have to travel a far greater distance. Mr Lambert said his lorries would have to drive through the middle of Methwold which would just transfer the problem from one village to another and push the lorries onto smaller roads. He believed trying to obtain a 20mph limit would be safer. Chair said the weight restrictions were just not going to happen as they were not feasible and it would be more effective to write to the

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

Wissington factory and the constabulary. Chair proposed he discuss this matter with Mr Storey and draw up a plan of action, Mr Studd seconded, all in favour.

34. Insurance Renewal – Clerk read out three prices, the most competitive being from Zurich (current insurers) at £1400.93. Clerk also stated their three year contract cost of £1,343.48/annum. Mrs Bane said Zurich had been the Parish Council's insurers for a number of years and were helpful in the past so proposed renewing with them on a three year contract at £1,343.48/annum, Mr Studd seconded, all in favour.

35. Edmund de Moundeford Trust Update by Mr Martin Storey – Mr Storey said the planning application had been submitted.

CORRESPONDENCE

36. Police Connect – Emails – Community Updates; Op Randall Rural Crime Newsletters; Weekly consumer & scam alerts; Covid-19 Updates; Car cruisers in Thetford to be dealt with robustly for illegal gatherings; Dog Thefts; Safety advice for hot weather; Can You Help Reunite WW2 Veteran with his Treasured Beret?; Recruitment Panel Support Volunteer

37. BCKLWN – Email – Weekly Covid-19 updates from Cllr Stuart Dack; Statement of Licensing Policy Review - Licensing Act 2003

38. NCC – Emails – Emergency road closure in Southery; Emergency road closure in Weeting; Norwich Western Link Local Access Consultation; NCC welcomes £32m in a major cash boost for Norfolk and Suffolk; Emergency closure of Sedge Fen Road in Southery

39. RAF Feltwell – Email - Notification of EOD explosive operation 13/8/2020, 0900 - 1530 hrs

40. TWR Accountants – Email – August Tax Tips

41. PC Lee Anderton – Community Update – Downham Mkt Safer Neighbourhood Team

42. Anglian Water - New Water Pipeline

43. Community Action Norfolk – Emails – Funding Newsletter

44. Alive West Norfolk – Active Mile

45. Rural Services Network – Rural Bulletins

46. Early Help Children's Services – Email – West Norfolk Early Help C-19 Round up (weekly)

47. NHS Norfolk & Waveney CCG – Email – Future Care Preferences 'Have Your Say'

48. Locus Services – Email – Specialist cleaning services

49. Brochures - Parish Magazine

50. **CHEQUES** – Payees list was approved and cheques will be signed by Mr Lambert, Mrs McGeeney and Mr Rayner for the following – J Martin £81.06, S Sargent £155.75, T George £253.58, Viridor £307.82, E.ON £369.34, URM £12.60, S P Landscapes £475.00, Fenland Leisure Products £180.00, Anglian Water £103.91, K&M Lighting £103.27, R H Landscapes £810.00, RBL Poppy Appeal £36.00. Standing order to J Martin £846.47, direct debit to BT £54.66.

51. PLANNING

- **Mr J Morris: Extend existing 1.8m high fence by 3m at 2 St John's Way** – Mrs Arnold said she was of the understanding that the Oakfields site rules enforced by the developer dictated fencing in front of any property on this estate should not be more than 1m high. Mr Lambert proposed that the Borough Council consults the local site rules and if this is the case, the Parish Council object to this application, Mrs Arnold seconded, 7 in favour, Mr Storey abstained.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

52. Highways – Clerk said Highways had advised they will be programming two schemes (part resurface, part slurry overlay) for footpaths along High Street, Bell Street and Wilton Road. A completely new footway from the end of Manor Park Estate extending to the entrance of Portal Close will also be installed.

53. Meeting Commencement Time – Mr Storey asked if meetings could start at 7.00 pm as they have been over 2 hours in duration.

54. Email Acknowledgement – Mr Cole asked if it was necessary for Councillors to respond to information emails sent by the Clerk with a ‘Thank you’ as these emails were clogging up his Inbox. The Chair said it was courtesy and down to the individual whether they did this or not.

55. Vacancy – In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, Section 85, the Council declares a vacancy has arisen by reason of failure to attend meetings. Notification of this vacancy has been made to the Returning Officer at the Borough Council of King’s Lynn & West Norfolk who will start the publication process.

56. Grass Verges Along The Beck – Mrs McGeeney said she had been asked by residents of 18A and 18B why the Parish Council does not cut the grass at the front of these properties and Hall Farm Close. The Chair said it is unadopted land and Mr Lambert suggested residents write to the Borough Council to request they cut it as it does not belong to the Parish Council.

57. Wildflowers – Mrs McGeeney asked Councillors their opinions on her email regarding growing wildflowers on the verges in the village, having seen these in another village. Mr Lambert said that from a farmer’s point of view the ground would need to be stirred up in order for them to take and thus would encourage everything else to grow. Mr Storey suggested asking the Parish Council of the village where these were growing for advice.

Next Parish Council meeting to be held virtually on Monday 12th October 2020 at 7.30 pm via the Zoom platform.

Meeting declared closed 9.40 pm.

Due to planning application time constraints, planning was REFUSED for the following application:-

- Mrs A Jones: **Wooden garage at 5 Western Close** – Garage is over the building line at the front of the property and interferes with the view from the neighbouring property. No other property in this cul de sac has any large building in their front garden therefore the street scene will be affected and a precedence set. 6 Councillors objected, 3 in favour, Mr Storey abstained.