

A Meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday the 12th day of DECEMBER 2022 at the Royal British Legion, Long Lane – commencing 7.00 pm

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Messrs Cock, Cole, Fenn, Lambert, Rayner and Storey, Mrs Arnold and Mrs Bane. Also present 2 members of the public.

APOLOGIES: Apologies were received from Mrs McGeeney, Mrs Peckham, Mrs Wilson and RAF Commander Geary.

The Chair read out a statement clarifying the regulations regarding the recording of meetings stating that although recording a meeting is not illegal, the posting of the recording onto social media is. The recording must be for the sole use of the recorder and any future questions or queries must be answered with facts from the minutes as these are the official records of the meetings. No members of the public should be recorded without their agreement.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were no declarations of interest.

MINUTES: Minutes of the last Parish Council meeting were approved. Mr Lambert proposed, Mr Fenn seconded, 5 in favour, Mr Storey abstained having not been present.

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

MATTERS ARISING

1. **RAF Feltwell** – The RAF Commander sent his apologies and would forward his report to the Clerk after the meeting (attached).

2. **Risk Assessment** – **Weekly:** Handyman has repaired the loose sign and will hopefully be able to complete the welding of the loose iron railings this week, weather permitting. **Quarterly Inspection Report:** Harrowden Turf have kindly offered a free pallet of 70m² turf and Clerk had circulated quotations from Peckham Construction, R H Landscapes and Kelley Landscapes for building up the sides of the skate park with topsoil and laying turf. 8 Councillors had responded, all in favour of R H Landscapes's quotation of £450.00 + VAT as it was the most price competitive and Clerk instructed them to proceed with the work. Mr Lambert said Harrowden would not cut frozen turf so he would liaise with R H Landscapes regarding delivery of soil, stating the sides could still be built up and the turf laid at a later date. Mrs Arnold proposed ratifying R H Landscapes quotation of £450.00 + VAT, Mr Cole seconded, all in favour. **Benches:** No update.

3. **Balance Sheet** – No queries. Clerk had circulated three quotations from telephone and broadband providers which included moving her existing line to her office; BT quoted Halo £43.95/month or Halo with Complete Wifi £44.95/month for a digital phone line plus £250 to move the line, TalkTalk Fibre £21.95/month plus £100-£200 to move the phone line or £27.95/month inc phone line move, and Vodafone Superfast 2 Broadband £16.95/month inc phone line move. All are 24-month contracts. Mrs Bane proposed moving to Vodafone, Mr Cock seconded, all in favour. Clerk will organise.

4. **Allotment Pest Control** – No report received yet for December.

5. **NALC** – Both Chair and Clerk thought the Council should register an interest in the management of the payroll and website schemes being offered by NALC. No costs had been advised. It was agreed to register an interest in the first instance.

6. **Ranger Visit** – No report yet from the October visit. Next visit is January. Clerk to re-request leaves are cleared along Hill Street and Buddleia bushes from Short Beck.

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

7. Cllr Martin Storey Report – Mr Storey said NCC have opened warm hubs in 47 libraries, the nearest being Downham Market or Thetford. Budget to be set in February and with a deficit of £60m, cuts will have to be made. A decision should be made soon on whether the construction of a new Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King's Lynn will go ahead, to be built on the existing site. Mr Storey urged everyone to pull together during this difficult period and consider their neighbours. Details of help available is on both BCKLWN and NCC websites. Chair asked for an update on Wilton Road and Lodge Road roundels and Mr Storey said he would chase these at a Highways meeting on 21/12/22. Clerk to email Mr Storey a list of other outstanding Highways items.
8. Playing Field Boundary Wall – Meeting to take place with owners on their return to the UK in April, date tbc. Chair said replacement orange fencing would be in place over the Christmas period.
9. Hall Drive Wall – Clerk had had no response from Highways re greenery.
10. Changing Rooms – **Showers:** John Waites, a local plumber, had recommended replacing all shower heads and quoted to supply 8 shower heads at £10.00 each and install at £60.00. Mrs Bane proposed Mr Waites proceed with the work at £140.00, Mr Cock seconded, all in favour.
11. Norfolk County Council 1 Million Trees Project: Chair asked for this to be shelved until a new Arborist is employed. All agreed.
12. Highways – **St Mary's Street:** Ongoing. **Widening of Oak Street/Wilton Road Footpath:** Clerk awaiting update from Highways. **Footpath from Portal Close to Hereward Way:** Highways said nothing can be done until the new surface is laid next year.
13. Doctor's Surgery Car Park – Hastoe Housing replied that the overgrowing greenery inside the car park was the responsibility of the Surgery who would be within their right to return the chippings to them. Mr Cock said he would undertake this work and Mr Storey asked him to invoice the Council for this. It was suggested in future to add this to the allotment hedge cutting schedule.
14. Parking on Grass – Mr Storey thought this was no longer happening so had not spoken to the owner. Mrs Arnold said the vehicle was parked on the grass that morning but this only happened when vehicles were parked in front of his driveway. Mr Storey said he would speak to the owner.
15. Playing Field Plans – Clerk said Wicksteed were coming to polish out some ridges in the slide and she had received notification from the CIL Officer that funding had been transferred.
16. Overhanging Greenery – Highways said the owner of 50 Wilton Road had responded, stating he was not prepared to cut his hedge back any further as it was within his boundary and offered noise protection and privacy. He had met with Highways and Mr Storey years ago after the one-way system was introduced which he wrote had turned Paynes Layne into a "rat-run" and said he had given up some of his land at the time to make the corner safe. Mr Storey said he understood the owner's point of view and Mr Lambert agreed. Chair thought Highways should deal with this directly since they had agreed the road was not wide enough. Clerk to contact Highways.
17. Feltwell in Bloom Monthly Update – Clerk read out letter from FiB requesting funding of £3135.00 (4 x planters £1000.00, 30 x bags of compost £135.00, plants £1000.00 and signage £1000.00). Chair said the Parish Council do not have a funding or grants policy although had supported various groups in the past under Section 137 of the LGA. Mr Cock thought this was a huge request at an extremely difficult time for residents and although did not support funding the full amount suggested funding two planters. Mrs Bane proposed funding two planters at £250.00 each, no seconder. Mr Fenn proposed purchasing four planters at £1000.00 so they remain the property of the Parish Council, Mr Cock seconded, 3 in favour. Clerk to contact FiB.

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

18. CIL Project Funding – Chair is waiting for the stonemason to look at the war memorial but said it could be seen from photos taken a few years ago that the crack had not worsened. He would also obtain further quotes for St Mary's clockface in time for the July round of funding.

19. Damaged Streetlight at Curtis Drive – Clerk is still trying to reclaim the £250 excess from third party insurers.

20. Iron Bridge & Track – Chair said an Anchor Ward resident had emailed for an update. Mr Storey said he would be discussing this matter at his meeting with Andy Wallace on 21/12/22.

21. Memorial Bench High Street – Mr Lambert's son had levelled and capped the bench feet, put brackets on all four corners and taken the bench to the shot-blasters. Painting options were discussed and Mr Cock suggested asking the Handyman. Clerk to speak to Handyman when the bench is ready.

22. Playing Field Pedestrian Gate – Clerk said the PROW Area Technician had advised the path from Falcon Road to the playing field was not a PROW. Mr Lambert felt the gateway should be left as it was otherwise it would open up the field to motorbikes etc and said mobility scooters and bikes could access the field via the other entrances. All agreed but Mrs Bane felt a gate should be installed on the entrance at the corner of Paynes Lane. Mr Lambert believed there was a gate there already but would check.

23. SAM2 – Chair asked if he could purchase a new battery for the older SAM2 at £91.50 + VAT. Mrs Arnold proposed purchasing a new battery, Mr Cock seconded, all in favour. Chair to purchase.

24. Feltwell Community Group – Defibrillator, Outdoor Gym Equipment & Donation Request – Clerk, as Secretary of the Feltwell Community Group (FCG), said £350.00 had been donated by British Sugar towards the gym equipment giving a total donation to the Parish Council of £4500.00, leaving a deficit of £1986.06. Mrs Peckham, although not present, had advised she did not make a CIL application as there was £1726.40 left in the lockdown grants which could be put towards the equipment and the remaining £159.66 could be paid for by the precept. Clerk said FCG were happy to pay the remaining amount and Mrs Bane proposed the deficit be funded by the lockdown grants and the remainder from FCG but there was no seconder. Mr Lambert felt the deficit should be funded entirely by the Council and proposed funding it via the lockdown grants and the remainder from the precept, Mrs Arnold seconded, all in favour. Clerk thanked the Councillors for their support and would arrange for £4500.00 to be transferred so that the Council could order the gym equipment. Chair said FCG had already transferred £1211.00 to the Council for the defibrillator which had been ordered.

25. Budget 2023/24 – Clerk had circulated figures forecasting the financial situation at y/e 31/3/23. Chair felt the precept would have to be increased to accommodate increases in wages, grass cutting and electricity costs of 30-40% more and said Feltwell had one of the lowest precepts for a large village. Purchase of planters at £1000.00 and election cost of £2000-£2500, more if ~~uncontested~~ contested, also needed to be considered. Mr Lambert felt under the current climate, the precept should not be increased as people were in financial hardship and as such, projects should be put on hold. Precept to be decided at the next meeting.

26. Review Grass Maintenance Contract – Chair proposed amending the Memorial Garden to being mown not strimmed, Mrs Bane seconded, all in favour. Clerk to update contract. Everyone agreed that TOP Garden Services had done a good job this season. Clerk to advise Mr Storey of the total number of cuts undertaken this season when final invoices are received.

CORRESPONDENCE

27. Police Connect – Emails – No issues relating to Feltwell
28. NCC – Emails – Two Norfolk Fire Stations to Open Up for Christmas. **Road Closure:** Long Lane 6/12/22 9am – 3pm for NCC cover and frame replacement works
29. RAF Lakenheath – Email – **Notification of operations:** 17/11/22 Explosive Proficiency Training, 5 detonations; 15/12/22 Explosive Operations, 5 detonations.
30. Barclays Bank plc – Email – Update details – accepted and submitted 7/12/22
31. Rt. Hon Elizabeth Truss MP – Email – Invitation to a Meeting
32. Norfolk & Waveney Health & Care Partnership – Email – Updates
33. Rural Services Network – Emails – Bulletins
34. Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd – Notification of external auditor appointment – PKF Littlejohn LLP
35. Anglian Water – Email – Update on new pipeline between Bexwell and Bury St Edmunds
36. Brochures - Parish Magazine, Clerks & Councils Direct

37. **CHEQUES** – Mrs Bane proposed approving the December payments, Mrs Arnold seconded, all in favour. Cheques signed for the following:- J Martin £535.00, S Sargent £79.75, T George £48.00, K&M Lighting £100.21, Royal British Legion £80.00, I Rayner £31.50, London Hearts £1453.20, Westcotec £4223.40, Wicksteed £14,052.22. Direct Debits to Biffa £176.42, BT £66.86, EDF Energy £94.09, NPower £1104.89 and URM £85.10. Standing Order to J Martin £955.50.

38. PLANNING

22/02127/F – Proposed One Detached Two-Storey Dwelling at Former Coal Yard and Dwellings at 28 & 30 Long Lane, Feltwell: Developer already has planning permission to build 19 new properties at 28 and 30 Long Lane and any additional housing would over-intensify this development site. 8 Councillors objected - REFUSED

22/01944/F – New Build Dwelling with Associated Parking, Renovation & Extension to Existing Garage - Outline Planning Approved 18/01706/O - at 5 Short Beck, Feltwell: 7 Councillors no comment although Mr Cock raised a concern about another access being created onto Long Lane, particularly near a junction – NO COMMENT

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

39. Hand Sanitisers – Clerk received email from BCKLWN asking if extra sanitiser supply was needed. Mr Lambert said there was more than adequate stock.

40. Reservoir – Mr Fenn gave information on the new perched reservoir formally proposed to be constructed at Southery Fen with a capacity to store 55 million m³ of water. It was now proposed to be constructed in the Middle Level Commissioners catchment area near to the A141 at Chatteris, as it was deemed a better location.

41. Gritting – Following forecasts of prolonged frost periods and learning that Highways only grit main roads through the village, Chair asked if local resilience planning was necessary. Whilst Mr Storey thought this was a good idea, he felt sure Councillors would assist with gritting other areas if necessary and if not, Mr Cock suggested the Handyman may undertake this task.

42. St Mary's Churchyard – Mr Storey thanked all those involved with the Christmas tree and lights in the churchyard and everyone agreed how wonderful it looked.

The next meeting will be held on Monday 9th January 2023 at the British Legion.
Meeting declared closed 9.12 pm. Chair wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.