

A Meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday the 10th day of JULY 2023 at the Royal British Legion, Long Lane – commencing 7.30 pm

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Messrs Cole, Fenn, Lambert, Rayner and Storey, Mrs Arnold, Mrs McGeeney, Mrs Peacock and Mrs Peckham. Also present 3 members of the public and RAF Commander Geary.

APOLOGIES: Mrs Bane and Mrs Wilson.

The Chair asked if anyone was recording the meeting and Mr Cole replied that he was. All members of the public gave their consent to be recorded.

The Chair then stated that the complaint made against him had been dropped and thanked Councillors and members of the public for their support.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: Mrs Peckham declared an interest in Item 37.

MINUTES: Minutes of the last Parish Council meeting were approved. Mr Cole proposed, Mr Fenn seconded, 6 in favour, Mrs Peacock abstained having not been in office at that time.

PUBLIC SPEAKING: The meeting was suspended for 10 minutes for Public Speaking.

MATTERS ARISING

1. **RAF Feltwell** – The RAF Commander explained Exercise Arctic Challenge was a large military exercise involving all 48th FW military personnel, himself included. The British American Committee met 12/6/23 to look at strategic issues, ie. local roads and housing, and are exploring various funding avenues with Norfolk and Suffolk Highways to improve local roads, particularly from Feltwell to Lakenheath and Lakenheath to Mildenhall. Security Forces conducted their first on-ground demonstration at the Royal Norfolk Show as part of community engagement building, replicating their performance at the Suffolk Show earlier in the year. Safety reminders had been issued to personnel prior to 4th July celebrations. Final preparations are underway for the plethora of upcoming changes of command. The newly appointed Chief of Air Staff is Sir Rich Knighton, a non-flyer with an engineering background. Mrs Peckham asked if there was a newsletter which could be used as a platform to remind USAF personnel that dogs are not permitted on the playing field and RAF Commander said he would put a notice on the bulletin board which would be more effective. RAF Commander to confirm if military aircraft is legally permitted to be flown across the village following a recent sighting by a member of public as he was of the understanding that although there was no official regulation in place, pilots were instructed to avoid villages as much as possible. He asked for dates and times of these sightings to be recorded if this was a regular occurrence as he could then obtain further details. RAF Commander departed the meeting 7.55 pm.

2. **Risk Assessment** – **Weekly:** No issues reported. Clerk circulated three prices for litter bins and Mrs McGeeney proposed purchasing the Elipsa, a like-for-like replacement at £157.66 + VAT, Mrs Peckham seconded, all in favour. Handyman had requested the purchase of a DeWalt 562P1 leaf blower to enable him to clear leaves from the tennis court much more efficiently. The most cost-effective price found was £169.89 + VAT including a battery from Power Tools UK. Mr Cole suggested purchasing an extra battery to charge whilst the leaf blower was in use at £48.19 + VAT from the same company. Mrs McGeeney proposed purchasing the DeWalt 562P1 leaf blower and extra battery at £218.08 + VAT, Mrs Peckham seconded, all in favour. Clerk to purchase all items. Clerk said the Police were upping their village presence following the recent spate of vandalism and graffiti. **Annual Operational Inspection:** The report was circulated and most items were either Low Risk or Very Low Risk. Mrs Peckham felt the Clerk should look at these with the Handyman after the school holidays, all agreed.

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

3. Balance Sheet – No queries.

4. Allotment Pest Control – June report received.

5. NALC – Newsletters circulated.

6. Cllr Martin Storey Report – Mr Storey praised the Clerk for keeping parishioners and councillors abreast of Borough and County Council matters. Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils will jointly prepare a Local Nature Recovery Strategy to improve wildlife habitats and will receive £333,000 and £282,000 respectively over two years to fund this project. Evening road closures will be in place for resurfacing works at Stradsett A134/A1122 24/7/23–28/7/23 and Tottenhill roundabout A10/A134 31/7/23–4/8/23. Mr Storey will put forward his recent site inspection of Southery Road to Highways and then asked for thought to be given to projects which could be put forward for his Members funding allowance. Chair said Andy Wallace had advised during his visit of 6/7/23 that the 30mph and 40mph roundels for Wilton Road and Lodge Road would be part of the white-lining scheme therefore Mr Storey would obtain an update since they were included in the Road Safety Community Scheme financial year ending 31/3/22.

7. Playing Field Boundary Wall – Clerk read an email from the owners advising that a sudden close family bereavement had prevented their return to the UK therefore it was agreed to wait before proceeding any further.

8. Changing Rooms – Clerk said the meter door had been ripped off again so she had contacted J Gooch Electrical who recommended fitting a replacement front cover and frame, quoting £180 + VAT to supply and fit. She had proceeded with this under Financial Regulation 3.4, considering it an urgent repair.

9. Highways – Clerk said Andy Wallace had been confused and the order to side out the footpath in front of 2 Oak Street was in fact with the contractor. The owner had in the meantime cut back the hedge. Clerk had reported missing ‘Paynes Lane’ sign near the Social Club.

10. Doctor’s Surgery Car Park – Mr Storey had not yet contacted the Practice Manager.

11. Overhanging Greenery – During his visit on 6/7/23, Andy Wallace said Dan Jordan, the new Highways Engineer, would be visiting the owners of 50 Wilton Road the following day to discuss the hedge. Clerk to request update. Clerk to write to owner of 6 Newcombe Drive requesting their hedge protruding the pavement is cut to within their boundary and to 19 Wilton Road requesting all greenery is cut back within the boundary.

12. Feltwell in Bloom Monthly Update – Half yearly report had been received and circulated. Mrs McGeeney still felt the wildflowers should be grown near the wall of Oakfields Estate preventing the existing area from becoming a ‘mud bath’ when growing season had finished. Mr Fenn said FiB were supposed to have scarified the grass for the wildflowers and that flowerbeds had not been agreed. Mr Storey and Mr Lambert both felt the area should have the opportunity to grow before any comments were made to FiB. Mr Lambert said the planters look much better.

13. CIL Project Funding – **Clockface:** Chair had been advised by the CIL Officer that the Parish Council would not be eligible to apply for funding for the church clockface revamp although the church itself would, however it did not think a revamp was necessary at present. As custodians of the money donated for the church clockface revamp, the Parish Council could give the money to the church should they apply when the next round opens in January 2024, if this were successful. **War Memorial:** Chair is meeting a local builder to look at options but said the British Legion were insisting any work be finished in time for the Remembrance Service. He therefore felt an

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

application could not be submitted as there was no certainty of this. **Playing Field Fence:** Chair asked members' thoughts on a fence around the play area (see Item 29). Mrs Peckham said she was not wholly in favour of a fence due to the large area it would need to encompass, stating it would have to be situated well out into the field to pose no risk to skate park users. She said the layout would have to be well planned out so it also caused no hazard to pedestrians crossing the playing field in the dark. Mr Lambert said a fence should not be necessary once the gates had been renewed. Mr Storey agreed with Mrs Peckham and questioned if a fence was necessary as it had only ever been requested by one person out of a vast number of users. Mr Fenn also agreed with Mrs Peckham and felt subdividing the field would reduce its use. Mrs Peckham felt money would be better spent on replacing rusted sections of the car park fence which could be funded by CIL monies already obtained. It was concluded by all that no application for CIL Funding would be applied for at this time.

14. Memorial Bench High Street – Mrs McGeeney said the revamped bench looked lovely and she had received lots of positive comments from parishioners.

15. Defibrillator – Chair said the defibs from London Hearts did not have carry bags with them unlike the one supplied by The Community Heartbeat Trust, therefore the rescue packs were laying loose and probably wouldn't be taken with the defib in an emergency. He requested the purchase of two carry bags at £35 + VAT each plus £15 + VAT delivery. Mr Storey proposed two carry bags be purchased, Mrs Peckham seconded, all in favour.

16. Grass Maintenance Contract Quotations – Mr Cole said the area of concern at the churchyard still had not been tended to although Mr Lambert thought the churchyard itself was not too bad. Mrs Peckham said the playing field entrance near the Spar had not been strimmed again but the playing field was okay because there had not been much growth. Mr Storey said the second and third cuts should have been quite easy because of this and stood by his decision not to pay the contractor as the job was not of a good enough standard. Mr Lambert felt the contractor should not be awarded the contract again as he had been rude to the Clerk and Mrs Wilson, and had previously made an appalling job of the churchyard. Mrs Peckham said the contractor was due on site again this Wednesday so suggested monitoring the work and taking photographs of any areas not cut well. Clerk said another contractor could take on the contract at his price tendered earlier in the year if it were decided not to pursue with the current contractor but he had implied to Mr Lambert that he would like a commitment to next season's contract if this were to happen. Mrs Peckham said the Council could not commit to this as next season's tender price was unknown. She felt the current contractor's April and May invoices should be paid, work monitored and payment withheld for September and October if work was not up to standard. She suggested waiting until after this week's cut and proceeding from there. Mr Storey proposed no payment be made for April and May's invoices, no seconder. Mr Lambert proposed persevering with the current contractor, submitting a complaint accompanied by photos if the cuts are inadequate and insisting they are redone immediately, and withholding payment for future invoices if there were any issues, Mrs Peckham seconded, 6 in favour, Mr Storey against.

17. Warren Energy Community Fund 2023 – Clerk had ordered a four-seater Dale bench from TDP Ltd at £465.47 + VAT and anchor kit at £67.92 + VAT. Estimated delivery date w/c 7th August and Mrs Peckham kindly offered to accept delivery which would be on a pallet so it could then be forklifted to the playing field.

18. Barclays Bank Mildenhall Closure – Clerk said deposit card had arrived.

19. Oak Garden Wall – Clerk said MWM (Anglia) would carry out the work asap.

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

20. Rangers – During his visit of 6/7/23, Andy Wallace advised ‘Rangers’ no longer existed and any issues should be via the online portal. Clerk said greenery on Moat Side had been cut back that day.

21. Streetlight Contract Renewal – Clerk said NPower refund of £17338.21 was still being processed and ERBS payment of £625.26 was still due. Mrs Peckham felt a 10% interest charge should be applied if these were not received within 7 days. All agreed. Clerk to write to NPower.

22. Feltwell Community Group (FCG) – Clerk said the Coronation picnic raised approx. £1500 and the fete £3157, and that it had pleased her to hear all village groups had done very well.

23. Bus Shelters – Clerk said Mr Sparkle had scheduled the clean for this Wednesday.

24. Float for Parade – Mrs McGeeney will forward receipts for decorations to the Clerk for reimbursement.

25. Second Memorial Bench – Clerk had advised Peckham’s Construction that the concrete pad could now be installed as the street licence had been granted.

26. Audit – Approve Accounts – Clerk advised AGAR was with external auditors for assessment.

27. Casual Vacancy & Appointment of Internal Drainage Board Representative – Any vacancy would be advised after the meeting on 13th July.

28. To Consider Residents’ Concerns Regarding Hill Street Junction with St Mary’s Street/The Beck and Speeding Along The Beck – Andy Wallace met with the Chair, Clerk, Mr Cole, Mr Lambert and Mrs Peckham on 6/7/23 to discuss these matters. **Hill St Junction with St Mary’s St:** Mr Wallace said an order for a STOP line costs £10K plus and might not be successful therefore agreed to install a ‘Give Way Ahead’ sign further back from the junction and redo all white-lining, including painting ‘SLOW’ on the road just before the junction. **The Beck:** Mr Wallace agreed to install another post for the SAM2 near the post box in a bid to slow down traffic and to paint ‘NO ENTRY’ on the road at the top of The Beck.

29. To Consider Playing Field Matters Raised in Email from Parishioner – **Deadly Nightshade:** Mr Lambert had removed the plant but said it was in fact White Bryony. **Gates:** Mr Samuels had sent two quotations for kissing gates to the Clerk; one for metal and the other for wooden. Clerk was asked to explore alternative designs. The self-closing mechanism was still not working so Clerk will obtain update from Mr Samuels. **Fence:** (See Item 13).

30. To Consider Resident’s Enquiry re SAM2 Data – Chair said he would present the downloaded data at the next meeting.

31. Iron Bridge & Track – Anchor Ward – Chair and Mr Fenn said they had found the bridge and track to be in terrible condition and understood the residents’ frustrations. Clerk received a response from Liz Truss MP on 26/6/23 who had raised concerns about maintenance with G’s Fresh, Walderseys, South Yorkshire Pension Association and Bidwells, and would keep the council updated. No further news yet.

32. Fence – Short Beck – Clerk to write to property on Short Beck re fence falling onto the road.

33. Bench at Addisons Close – As Mr Samuels had not repaired the bench, Mr Cole said he had undertaken this work. Chair thanked him for this.

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

34. To Consider Bid for Parish Partnership 2024/25 – Mr Lambert suggested extending a trod due to be installed by developers of land on Long Lane to the end of their boundary (pertaining to their planning conditions) to Portal Close entrance. Deadline is 8th December.

35. To Consider Councillor Training Offer – An invitation for councillors to attend a two-session training course with Methwold and Northwold Parish Councils had been received from Methwold Parish Council at a cost of £16.67/session each. There were only two spaces available and Mrs Peacock said she would like to attend. Clerk asked anyone else interested to let her know asap.

36. To Consider Quotations for Quarterly Play Inspections – Clerk received three quotations; Online Playgrounds at £60/inspection, Sovereign offering a package of two inspections per year over five years at £399 and Wicksteed at £132/inspection. Mr Lambert said Online Playgrounds had provided a good service in the past and proposed continuing with them at £60/inspection, Mrs Peckham seconded, all in favour.

37. To Review Changing Rooms User Agreement for Feltwell United FC – Mrs Peckham said a Veterans team was being formed and would hopefully take part in a Sunday league. Chair proposed no changes to the existing User Agreement, all in favour. Current rent is £25/home game. Chair asked how much the club pays for a referee and Mrs Peckham replied £45-£60/game. Mr Lambert proposed a rent increase of £2/home game, Mr Fenn seconded, 7 against. Mr Cole proposed an increase of £5/home game, no seconder. Mr Fenn proposed a 10% increase of £2.50/home game to cover increases in electricity, water and cleaning costs, Mrs McGeeney seconded, 5 in favour, Mrs Peckham abstained, Mr Storey against stating the village was lucky to have a football team who were doing well and as such the rent should remain at £25/home game as goodwill and gesture to the community spirit of the village. Clerk to write to Feltwell FC United.

38. To Consider Supporting BCKLWN Home Improvements Scheme – Clerk read out email regarding this and Mrs Peckham felt residents would benefit from a meeting where further information could be obtained especially under the current economic climate. Mr Lambert said the council could advertise the scheme on their behalf. A member of the public informed the meeting that The Food Pantry were distributing leaflets regarding this scheme at the weekend which were also available in the church and Mrs McGeeney suggested the church hold the meeting.

39. To Consider the Purchase of a Christmas Tree – Both Mr Storey and Mr Lambert offered to pay for the Christmas tree again this year to be situated in St Mary's Churchyard. Mrs McGeeney offered to decorate it in time for the last weekend of November.

CORRESPONDENCE

40. NCC – Emails – **Traffic Orders:** Emergency temp closure of Paynes Lane; **Press Release:** 22 New Fire Engines Unveiled for Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service. **Other:** Norwich Western Link Project Update

41. BCKLWN – Emails – Home Improvement Schemes

42. RAF Lakenheath – Email – **Notification of operations at RAF Feltwell:** 22/6/23 – EOD training – 13 small shots 1000-1300 hrs; 29/6/23 - 3 detonations 0900-1400 hrs

43. Norfolk & Waveney Health & Care Partnership – Email – Updates, £86m investment in three new diagnostic centres to be built at region's hospitals

44. Rural Services Network – Email – Bulletins

45. East Cambs District Council – Email - Reach Neighbourhood Plan (22/6/23-3/8/23)

46. Wicksteed – Email – Promotion of toddler products

47. Brochures - Parish Magazine, Clerks & Councils

48. CHEQUES/PAYMENTS – Mr Lambert proposed approving the payments, Mrs Arnold seconded, all in favour. Cheques signed for the following:- J Martin £19.99, S Sargent £125.25, T George £52.80, I Rayner £178.98, J Rolph £50.00, HMRC £257.12, Royal British Legion £65.00, S Walker Electrical £144.00, Top Garden £1612.80, TDP £640.06, Westcotec £72.00, Wicksteed £144.00. Direct Debits to Biffa £272.72, EDF Energy £46.83, SSE £1103.17, Vodafone £20.34. Standing Orders to K&M Lighting £100.21 and J Martin £1020.50. Clerk advised direct debit had been taken by URM of £80.35 but notification had been received after the June meeting so it had not been minuted.

49. PLANNING

23/00936/FM: Agricultural Development - New Livestock Building, G C Field & Sons, Southery Road Farm, Ploughmans Drove – 8 in favour, Mr Storey abstained. NO OBJECTION.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

50. Highways - During Public Speaking, a resident asked if a 20mph speed limit could be enforced from Oak Street junction with Bell Street to Central Garage having been a passenger in a car departing Newcombe Drive that had reversed into another to avert a collision with an oncoming speeding vehicle. Chair said this would be discussed at the next meeting and advised the resident to present his case to Andy Wallace at Norfolk Highways reporting the facts of the incident.

51. Playing Field – Mrs Peckham asked the Clerk to put a reminder in the Parish Magazine and council's Facebook page that no dogs are permitted on the playing field. She also asked if prices could be obtained for a sign for the vehicle access gate to the playing field instructing vehicles not to park in front of it as it obstructs emergency access.

As there is no August meeting, the Chair wished all members a nice summer and looked forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting to be held on Monday 11th September 2023 at the British Legion at 7.30 pm.

Meeting declared closed 9.49 pm.