

A Meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday the 11th day of MARCH 2024 at the Royal British Legion, Long Lane – commencing 7.30 pm

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Messrs Cole, Fenn, Lambert (Vice-Chair), Rayner (Chair) and Storey, Mrs Edwards, Mrs Peacock, Mrs Peckham and Mrs Wilson. Also present, RAF Commander Geary.

APOLOGIES: Apologies were received from Mrs Arnold and Mrs McGeeney.

The Chair asked if anyone was recording the meeting and Mr Cole replied that he was. All present consented to being recorded.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: Mrs Wilson declared an interest in Item 22 and Mr Cole in Item 26.

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

PUBLIC SPEAKING: The meeting was suspended for 8 minutes for Public Speaking.

MATTERS ARISING

1. **RAF Feltwell** – RAF Commander gave updates on operational, visits and community engagement. Key discussion themes for the British American Committee who met early February included challenges with landlords setting rents in accordance with rank-related allowances, engaging with Suffolk County Council to raise concerns about local roads, and educating the public about how dangerous pointing lasers at aircraft can be after incidents in Cambridgeshire and Norfolk. When asked by Mr Cole why it was now a frequent occurrence for so many detonations to take place on the same day, RAF Commander said this was a new training exercise called Tactical Blow & Go which simulated an airfield attack. Any ordnance is exploded by the EOD team who then clear it to make the area safe and then the Rapid Air Defence team repair any damage to the new runway built purely for training purposes. As this was to be his last meeting, RAF Commander thanked everyone for their service to the village as Councillors and particularly for their continued support of RAF Lakenheath. He departed the meeting at 7.40 pm.

2. **Risk Assessment** – **Weekly:** No issues had arisen from weekly inspections. Handyman had picked up lots of litter and cleared debris from the Changing Room gutters. Mr Lambert offered to purchase some iron sulphate to clear the moss from the tennis court. Mrs Peacock asked if it was safe to use a chemical on the court and Mr Fenn said it was organic and safe to use. Mrs Wilson suggested locking the court for a week for it to take effect. Mr Cole proposed Mr Lambert purchase the iron sulphate, Mrs Wilson seconded, all in favour. Mr Lambert to purchase iron sulphate and Clerk will ask Handyman to apply. **Quarterly Inspection:** Clerk gave pricing information from Wicksteed and Abacus but said until areas are decided, the costs were only rough guides. Clerk to arrange meeting on site before next meeting. **Gates:** Mr Lambert had scraped the mud back from outside the entrance and said the area beneath would need resurfacing. To be assessed during site meeting. Clerk to ask Handyman to dispose of mud.

3. **Balance Sheet** – No queries.

4. **Allotment Pest Control** – Report received for February. Clerk furnished Mr Storey with the annual report detailing vermin caught.

5. **NALC** – Newsletters circulated. Clerk supplied each Councillor with their new email address and password, and Chair said he would like these to be in use by Monday 18th March.

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

6. Cllr Martin Storey Report – Mr Storey said the NCC budget had been set at £528 million with an additional £60m for adult social services and £35m extra for children's service. A public consultation had been launched on three proposals which could save approximately £457,000/year; (1) switching off some streetlights across Norfolk; (2) introducing pre-booking of visits and change opening hours of Norfolk Record Office; (3) reducing opening hours at some recycling centres. Norfolk residents holding a disabled concessionary travel pass will be eligible for free bus travel 24 hours a day, seven days a week when travelling within the county. Borough Council news included new Biodiversity Net Gain rules which have come into force to ensure planning applications show how nature will be improved as a result of proposed development and the QE Hospital is still on track for completion 2030. Further information can be found on both websites. **Other matters:** Mr Storey said flooding had been an issue in the village and the Norfolk Flood Management Team were visiting the Londis this week following major flooding in the basement. He informed Mrs Peckham that the Borough Council would fund further consultation work pertaining to planning applications 22/00860/FM and 22/00866/FM as they have to engage consultants because they do not have the expertise to provide this information themselves. He was still trying to find out the cost of this. Potholes are being repaired as efficiently as possible on a tight budget but Mr Storey said if more people reported them, the timescale would be reduced. Mrs Peckham asked why Feltwell were still waiting for roundels when Hockwold's were painted 14/2/24, particularly as the gang had finished at 2.30 pm that day therefore could have undertaken this work afterwards. Mr Lambert said the roundels should have been painted whilst white lining at Hill Street. Clerk to contact Jason Moore. Chair asked if Mr Storey knew why a new bus stop had been installed along Wilton Road when there is already one near the Oakfields Estate, and why residents directly affected by this had not been consulted nor the Parish Council. Mr Lambert thought this was authoritarian and that a complaint should be made. Mr Storey suggested writing to the NCC Passenger & Transport Team.

7. Playing Field Boundary Wall – Clerk said Chase Timber Products would start installing the V-Mesh fence on 25/3/24.

8. Highways – Mrs Peckham asked Mr Storey if the pavement outside 2 Oak Street had been reassessed yet and said it should have been sided out as soon as the hedge was cut. Clerk had advised Andrew Wallace on 14/2/24 that the hedge had been cut and that siding out should be done asap. He had agreed but as the work had still not been done, she had chased Dan Jordan on 7/3/24 who said the work had been programmed with Norse and would be done in the next available work pack. Mr Lambert felt the path would still not be wide enough when sided out.

9. Overhanging Greenery – Mr Storey had visited 50 Wilton Road once but no-one was home so would keep trying.

10. Rangers – Clerk said residents of 1a Hill Street and 41 High Street had still not cleared the fronts of their properties. Chair had visited The Fish Piper but they had been closed.

11. To Consider Residents' Concerns Regarding Hill Street Junction with St Mary's Street/The Beck and Speeding Along The Beck – **Hill St Junction with St Mary's St:** The 'Give Way Ahead' sign had been installed but it was questioned how effective it would be since it was just a plain white triangle with a red edge and was pushed into the side of the road so was barely visible. **The Beck:** SAM2 post has been installed.

12. To Consider Resident's Enquiry re SAM2 Data – Chair would furnish Councillors with two lots of data by the end of the week. Mrs Peckham said the Wilton Road SAM2 had not been working for a month but Chair said data would still be collected. He said there was no statutory requirement to move them and Westcotec advised effectiveness was reduced if they were moved too regularly. He also said he could not change the battery as they units were difficult to open when full of water.

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

13. Iron Bridge & Track – Anchor Ward – Clerk said nothing further had been received from Liz Truss MP and it was agreed by all to monitor the situation.

14. Long Lane Development – Clerk said Flagship had a new contractor lined up to complete the scheme but this was not yet finalised. The target start date was now after Easter but not guaranteed.

15. To Amend the Bank Mandate – Mandate had been amended to include Mr Cole and Mr Fenn as signatories and remove Mrs Bane and Mr Cock.

16. Spar, High Street – Mrs Peckham said the area had been very untidy again and the postbox was constantly obscured by crates and difficult to access. She said the amount of cardboard posed a fire hazard and which Mr Storey said was not acceptable. Mr Lambert suggested relocating the postbox and Mrs Wilson questioned whether deliveries could be made at the rear of the shop so trolleys did not have to be stored on the front pavement. Chair felt this matter should be dealt with by Highways and Mr Storey said he would be happy to speak to the owner. Clerk to contact Highways.

17. 9 Oak Street, Collapsing Gable End – No work has been done since scaffolding was erected on 7/2/24. Clerk contacted Shires who manage the property and was informed the damage was being assessed 8/3/24 but had had no further update. Mrs Wilson felt the wall was very dangerous and could easily collapse further. She had witnessed school children scootering too close to the barriers and suggested writing to the Primary School to warn parents of the dangers via the Newsletter. Mrs Peckham felt the Clerk should write to the owners via Shires asking for a date for work to be done, stressing that it is very dangerous to road users and pedestrians. Mr Storey suggested contacting the RAF Commander to make them aware that their personnel were still living in the property. Clerk to write to the owners via Shires and the RAF Commander.

18. Budget & Precept 2024/25 – Solar Street Light: Clerk said Westcotec had given a ballpark figure of £2300 + VAT to supply and install a solar street light which should be southerly facing and have a clear path for optimum operation. No guarantee could be given that it would be fully operational during dismal, cloudy days but this did not occur often. The sensors operate at 30% light which is increased to 100% when movement is detected. The light turns off completely at midnight but lights up to 100% when movement is detected. Westcotec had not had any complaints and the Clerk had asked other councils with solar street lights who also had had no complaints. K&M had given a rough quote of £3000 + VAT and said the location at the front of the Almshouses would be suitable as there was an overhead supply. Clerk to write to the Edmund de Moundeford Trust as owners of the Almshouses to request permission for a street light to be installed here and obtain a firm price for one. **Defibrillator**: Chair had suggested purchasing a defib in the new financial year during budget discussions at the December meeting but when an email had arrived from the Dept of Health & Social Care advising of match-funding grants of £750 for defibs, he said he had jumped at the chance and requested the Clerk apply for two. Both applications were successful but subject to Council approval and payment being made asap therefore a cheque had been raised in anticipation of approval at this meeting. Chair said the Doctors Surgery had agreed to house a defib on an external wall for an annual fee of £30 to cover electricity costs and suggested siting the other at the British Legion. Mr Lambert proposed match-funding two defibrillators at £750 each and obtaining installation costs for both, email Councillors for approval, and ratifying the decision at the next meeting, Mr Cole seconded, all in favour. Clerk to obtain installation prices and email Councillors. Mr Lambert felt it only fair that all village organisations currently housing defibrillators on behalf of the Council and absorbing the running costs, i.e. R H Lindsay, Social Club and Londis, be offered the same. Mrs Peckham proposed all organisations mentioned be offered a £30 annual payment, Mr Cole seconded, all in favour. Clerk to write to all organisations. Mr Storey was prepared to donate £500 of his Member's Budget towards the new defibs and thought Adrian Lawrence to do the same. He said the Parish Council may not be eligible for their donations so the Community Group may have to apply. Clerk to contact Debbie Ess regarding this.

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

19. Year 6 Prom “Litter Pick” Donation Request - Clerk said litter pick will take place 13/4/24 and asked for any specific areas to be identified in time for the next meeting.

20. Request from Feltwell Community Group to use Playing Field and Changing Rooms for the Village Fete on Saturday 15th June 2024 – Chair said the Premises License application is in hand and that an additional form could be completed so the Designated Supervisor could be any member and not a specific individual.

21. Mundford U14 Football Team Request – Clerk had circulated an email following a request from Mundford U14 football team to use Feltwell’s pitch as theirs was waterlogged. This had been agreed in principle via email with the intention of ratifying the decision at the meeting however the Clerk had since been informed that they no longer required the pitch.

22. Feltwell Community Group Donation – Mrs Wilson said FCG would like to donate £400 to the Parish Council and that it would be nice to put it towards a new picnic bench for the playing field which had been discussed at previous meetings. This idea was well received and Mrs Wilson had taken the liberty of obtaining three prices for an octagonal, recycled plastic bench which she suggested could be situated in the shade under the trees. The most cost-effective price was from Earth Anchors at £595 + VAT plus a soft ground fixing kit. She was aware that the £400 would not cover the entire cost and asked if the RAF Lakenheath donation of £453.54 (to be spent on USAF personnel integration into the community) could be put towards it. Mrs Peckham was in favour of this and said the playing field is well used by Americans. Mr Storey proposed purchasing the picnic bench from Earth Anchors at £595 + VAT plus fixing kit and funding the balance with RAF Lakenheath’s donation, Mr Fenn seconded, 6 in favour, Mrs Wilson abstained. Mr Storey thanked Mrs Wilson for FCG’s donation.

23. Anglo-American Car Show – 18th May 2024 – Clerk said Mr Samuels had confirmed the date for this event as 18/5/24 and that he would like use of the Changing Room facilities. Hire Agreement to be sent and a fee of £27.50 to be charged in line with current rates. Insurance certificate to be obtained. All vehicles must be kept off the football pitch if it is a wet day as any damage must be rectified or a charge applied if the Parish Council has to undertake this work. Clerk to advise Mr Samuels that he won’t need to apply for a license as the Premises License will suffice.

24. Street Light Electricity Supply Renewal Quotes – Clerk contacted numerous companies but only managed to obtain two quotations as not many companies offered unmetered supply. The current provider SSE had quoted a standing charge of £5.41/month and 23.207p/kWh and Green Energy quoted a standing charge of £103.95p/day and 21.95p/kWh. Mrs Peacock proposed renewing with SSE, Mr Lambert seconded, all in favour. Clerk to renew with SSE.

25. Annual Playground Inspection Quotes – Clerk read out three quotations; The Play Inspection Company £235.00, Playdale Playgrounds £260.00 and Wicksteed £264.00. Mrs Peckham proposed the Play Inspection Company carry out the annual inspection, Mrs Wilson seconded, all in favour.

26. Review Allotment Terms of Reference – The Allotment Committee felt the current terms were still valid therefore Mrs Peckham proposed readopting them, Mrs Edwards seconded, all in favour.

27. Review Financial Regulations – Mrs Peckham felt Clause 6.4 needed amending so that any payments made outside of a meeting - as may be necessary from time to time, particularly in August when there is no meeting - could be agreed by email and ratified at the following meeting. She also felt Clause 6.5 needed amending so the Parish Council reserves the right to hold a cash float of up to £100 with the cash book checked monthly to cover any cash the Clerk may hold. Mrs Peckham proposed amending Clauses 6.4 and 6.5 of Financial Regulations as per her recommendations, Mrs Wilson seconded, all in favour. Clerk to amend and update website.

CORRESPONDENCE

28. BCKLWN - Emails - Local Plan review - notification of reconvened examination hearings; Portrait of the King; Parish Council Chairs Meeting 21/2/24; Loss of sanitary facilities; Annual 2024/25 Non Domestic Rates Bill - Account 6034915 (Changing Rooms are exempt); Lorraine Gore, Chief Executive - Announcement of her retirement on 1/9/24; Mayors Design Awards 2024
29. NCC - Emails - Traffic Orders: Temp closure of Feltwell Road, Methwold for bus stop construction works, 4-15/3/24, 7.30am-6pm. Other: D24 16 - Section 31(6) the Highways Act 1980
30. RAF Lakenheath - Emails - Notification of operations at RAF Feltwell: 22/2/24 - Explosive operations, 1 detonation 8am-1pm; 5-7/3/24 - training exercise, 1-15 small detonations 8am-6pm; 7/3/24 - final clean up demolition to dispose of leftover items, 2 detonations 9am-1pm
31. NHS Norfolk & Waveney Health & Care Partnership - Email - Updates
32. East Cambs District Council - Email - Cheveley Neighbourhood Plan Consultation
33. Rural Services Network - Email - Bulletins
34. Vodafone - Email - Monthly business broadband cost to increase by the Consumer Price Index Rate (CPI) plus an additional 3.9% from 1/4/24
35. CPRE - Invitation to Flood Management Conference
36. Zurich Insurance - Email - 80th Anniversary of D-Day Events
37. Norfolk Community Foundation - Email - Funding & Support News Feb 2024
38. Stop Wensum Link Campaign Group - Email - Norwich Western Link road funding
39. Premier Sports Surfacing - Email – Promoting products
40. Elevate Play - Email - Promoting ‘Recycled’ series
41. Queen Elizabeth Hospital - Email - Modernising update
42. Brochures - Parish Magazine, Clerks & Councils

43. **CHEQUES/PAYMENTS** – Mrs Edwards proposed approving the payments, Mr Lambert seconded, all in favour – Cheques to S Sargent £88.00, D Wilkinson £44.00, J Rolph £50.00, V Hurrell £100.00, Westcotec £296.40, London Hearts £1500.00. Direct Debits to Biffa £235.95, British Gas £125.05, Vodafone £20.34. Standing Orders to K&M Lighting £100.21, J Martin £1075.95.

44. PLANNING

There were no planning applications.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

45. Pay Review – Litter Collector & Handyman – To be considered at next month’s meeting.
46. Highways – Numerous deep potholes along St Mary’s Street which Clerk has reported.

Next meeting to be held on Monday 8th April 2024 at the British Legion at 7.30 pm.

Meeting declared closed 9.53 pm.