

The Meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday the 9th day of SEPTEMBER 2024 at the Royal British Legion, Long Lane – commencing 7.30 pm

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

APOLOGIES: Apologies were received from Mr Fenn, Mrs Edwards, Mrs McGeeney, Mrs Peckham and Mrs Wilson.

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

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were no declarations of interest.

MINUTES OF THE LAST PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: Clerk said Item 14 should have stated CTS Security's price did not include the £300 cost of a signalling device. Mr Cole proposed amending and accepting the minutes of the last meeting, Mrs Peacock seconded, all in favour.

PUBLIC SPEAKING: The meeting was suspended for 1 minute for Public Speaking.

MATTERS ARISING

1. **RAF Feltwell** – Sqn Leader Eaton was unable to attend so had forwarded his report again. Peace camps outside the main gate at RAF Lakenheath will be held the last Saturday of each month commencing 31/8/24 with a larger event scheduled for April 2025; a reminder of the extended flying window 9-20/9/24 due to NATO exercise commitments; and notification of an exercise to be carried out by the Medical Group is planned for 7-11/10/24 which will show increased military activity at RAF Feltwell with possible explosive detonations and aircraft arrivals/departures. Chair queried whether the runway would be used as it had been presented by Sqn Leader Geary back in January 2022 as an imitation runway for maintenance purposes. Mr Storey felt the question needed to be put to the Sqn Leader who should be attending some Parish Council meetings as there is an airbase in the village. He appreciated the attendance of previous postholders and said relations had improved because of it. All agreed. Clerk to write to the Squadron Leader, copying in his peer (to be advised by the Chair) and the Community Liaison Advisor to express the Councillors' disappointment that he had not attended a meeting since filling the post, and to obtain further information on the Medical Group's operation. Mrs Arnold will consult the planning application to ascertain whether the runway could be used for anything other than maintenance purposes.

2. **Risk Assessment** – **Weekly:** No issues. Handyman has cut the growth from a tree stump behind the gym equipment and Mr Cole said Round Up ought to be applied to prevent any future problems. Agreed to ask Hamills to plug stump. Clerk to ask Handyman to trim around the entrance near the cub hut as it is very overgrown and to ask Highways to cut back overgrowing greenery around the perimeter. Mr Storey suggested asking local farmers to do this if it were not in Highways remit.

Resurfacing: Work scheduled for w/c 16/9/24. **Quarterly Inspection:** Scheduled for September.

3. **Balance Sheet** – No queries.

4. **Allotment Pest Control** – August and September reports not yet received.

5. **NALC** – Updates circulated. Chair said the tree project was in hand.

6. **Cllr Martin Storey Report** – Mr Storey discussion of the Devolution Deal (£20m to be spent over 30 years) with new MPs had been deferred to Nov/Dec. 1211 people had responded to the public consultation and a decision would be made before Christmas. The 5-year £1m tree project had seen 500,000 trees planted in 2½ years so was on schedule. As at end June, 6653 props were holding up

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the QEH and the Prime Minister had confirmed new hospitals were still a priority for King's Lynn and Bury St Edmunds. New Business Awards results on website. Bus services have improved over the last 12-18 months and Government is looking to hand powers over to local authorities with the Dept of Transport allocating £49.5m for this purpose. Borough Council and Norfolk County Council news can be found on their websites. **Other matters:** Mr Storey had been told by Andrew Wallace that the roundels had been prioritised. Clerk said his response to her earlier that day had been that he could not determine what had happened with them so had reissued the order which included the extra areas discussed, to ensure they are completed. Mr Storey said they would be top priority.

7. Playing Field Boundary Wall – Continue to monitor wall. Mr Cole had sprayed the area again.

8. Highways – **2 Oak Street:** Clerk received update from Andy Wallace earlier that day stating Highways would progress now nesting season is over. **Other matters:** Mr Lambert said Highways had cut the Buddleia bush down to about 18" tall which appeared to have been quite an operation.

9. Overhanging Greenery – **50 Wilton Road:** Andy Wallace emailed the Clerk earlier that day stating he would instruct Dan Jordan to deal with this matter with some urgency now that nesting season is over. **Other matters:** 7 St Mary's Street had been cut back but nothing had been done at 2 Falcon Road. Clerk to ask Highways to deal with this. Clerk had only recently written to 9 Lodge Road and Mrs McGeeney wasn't present to give an update on 15 The Beck.

10. SAM2 Data – Chair did not have any SAM2 data available this month but said once the greenery is cut back around the perimeter of the field, he would be able to obtain data from the SAM2 positioned along Paynes Lane so that a traffic survey to be carried out.

11. Iron Bridge & Track – Anchor Ward – Ongoing. Chair had received an acknowledgement receipt from Terry Jermy MP but nothing from Royal London.

12. Long Lane Development – Clerk said Flagship were still unable to confirm a start date but were hopeful that contractors would be returning to site in the next 4-6 weeks.

13. Spar, High Street – Clerk said the Area Manager of Blakemore's had replied stating he had visited the Spar to help tidy the frontage and made the owner aware of the importance of keeping the area and post box clear. He had also offered a donation to any fundraising the Parish Council might be involved with. Mr Lambert said he had visited the Spar on several occasions since and thought a conscious effort was being made as there had been a big improvement. He thought a letter should be sent to thank them for this. Mr Storey disagreed and said the trolleys were unsightly and felt the frontage could look more pleasant. Chair said there wasn't much else the owner could do and felt a letter of acknowledgement should be sent.

14. Premises Licence – Fire Risk Assessment – Chair emailed the Councillors 20/8/24 to ask if a 50% deposit cheque could be raised for CTS Security to install integrated fire alarms at £5443.78 + VAT as had been agreed at the previous meeting and 8 Councillors had responded in favour. Cheque for £3266.26 was sent to CTS Security on 27/8/24. Mr Lambert proposed ratifying this payment, Mr Cole seconded, all in favour. Chair had met two electricians to look at the electrical work required but had been unable to obtain a third quote. Both electricians had different recommendations so he had found it difficult to obtain like-for-like quotations. He explained the electrical work involved connecting the supply for the fire alarms, replacing 4 new emergency lights and upgrading 14 existing lights to LED, replacing the electric boards and installing a commando socket. CTE Electrical price was £5285 + VAT and J Gooch Electrical £4971 + VAT. CTE priced to rewire the emergency lights on their own circuit and install a master switch whereas J Gooch had priced for self-testing emergency lights. Mr Cole felt that the lights should be on their

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

own circuit with a master switch for safety reasons. Mr Lambert suggested asking J Gooch to price for this too. Mr Cole proposed CTE Security undertake the electrical work at £5285 + VAT, Mrs Arnold seconded, all in favour. Chair will instruct CTE Electrical to proceed. All agreed the work should be funded via the CIL monies. Mr Cole asked how often the FRA needed to be carried out and Chair replied ideally every three years and that it could be undertaken by any competent individual. Mr Lambert thanked the Chair for the time he had spent on this project.

15. Audit – Approve Accounts – Clerk said the AGAR review had concluded that Sections 1 and 2 were in accordance with proper practices and there were no other matters giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met. The “Notice of Conclusion of Audit” and certified AGAR (Sections 1, 2 and 3) must be displayed by 30/9/24 and a length of time for which the “Notice” must be published had to be decided (previous statute was 14 days). Chair proposed displaying the “Notice” for 14 days, Mr Cole seconded, all in favour. Clerk to display “Notice” on noticeboard and website asap.

16. St Mary’s Church: Yew Tree & Church Clock Enquiry – Clerk had still not received the invoice for the Yew tree work.

17. BCKLWN: Dog Bin Request – Chair had still had no response so assumed the request to adjust heights of dog bins had been shelved.

18. Damage to Playing Field Entrance, 2nd June 2024 – Clerk said Zurich had been unable to obtain the Police Crime Report from the information provided. She was in receipt of quotations from J M Ayres (supply fence), Peckham’s Construction (remove existing and install new fence) and Niagri (remove existing, supply and install new fence) so would submit these to Zurich together with two quotations for a new sign as the original had also been damaged in the accident.

19. Consider Siting an Organic Green Bin at the Playing Field – Clerk said Biffa had agreed to match the Borough Council’s prices for bins which were £21.80/empty, £76.65 annual hire and £43.60 transfer note, giving a yearly saving of approx. £650. Mr Lambert felt a brown bin was not necessary at the playing field as the Handyman could take the greenery to the Churchyard.

20. Overgrowth around Dog Bins – Mr Lambert will strim around dog bins on Old Brandon Road and Long Lane again and the Chair thanked him for this. Clerk said Hemingford Construction would clear all greenery protruding from their site around the dog and rubbish bins.

21. Empty Freebridge Houses – Mrs Edwards had informed the Clerk that Freebridge were raising the properties with the portfolio manager.

22. To Ratify Decision for Feltwell PTA to Hire the Changing Rooms to operate a ‘Tuck Shop’ Throughout the School Summer Holidays – Clerk advised that unfortunately the Tuck Shop had folded due to not making enough money. Chair proposed not charging the PTA for the hire of the Changing Rooms for the Tuck Shop, Mr Cole seconded, all in favour.

23. To Discuss Complaint re Lodge Road Bus Shelter – Clerk had had no response from resident.

24. To Discuss Parish Partnership Scheme 2025/26 – No items brought forward as yet.

25. Allotment Committee Member Resignation – Following Mrs Arnold’s resignation, there is a vacancy on the Allotment Management Committee. Mr Storey thanked Mrs Arnold for her effort and time spent on the Committee and said she had been a great asset.

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

26. Email from Practice Manager, Feltwell Surgery re Car Park Lease – Clerk read an email from the Practice Manager stating that the previous owner had been shocked to discover the Surgery was being charged by the Parish Council for renting the overflow car park. She wanted to know “whose idea it had been to renege on the agreement and why” and what the Parish Council intended to do about this. Mr Lambert said the Council first charged the Surgery a peppercorn rent of £10/year for the overflow car park but in 2013, when the Council consulted its solicitor to renew the lease, the solicitor had recommended seeking the full open market current rent which at the time was £500/year. The Council felt this was too much and agreed to offer the land to the Surgery at £250/year on a 6-year lease. In a letter dated 18/9/13, the Practice Manager had advised the Doctors were happy for the increase in rent and agreed to maintain the car park. A contract for the 6-year lease dated 6/10/13 at £250/annum rent, signed by Drs Pullen and Sagar, is held in the Clerk’s file. The lease was up for renewal again in 2019 and after negotiation with the Surgery, it was decided at the Parish Council meeting held 13/1/20 to increase the rent to £300/annum for a 6-year lease with the Surgery continuing to be responsible for maintaining the car park. The Practice Manager stated in her email to the Council of 17/1/20 that the Doctors were happy with these terms so the Council instructed its solicitor to draw up the new 6-year lease for £300/annum, and a signed copy is held at the solicitor’s office. Mr Lambert said the Parish Council would be in breach of its remit to obtain income from its assets if it were not to charge rent for this piece of land and said it had cost the Council £750 to draw up the lease in 2019 and a further £650 to cut the hedge last year which should have been undertaken by the Surgery as part of their lease agreement but was carried out by the Council as a gesture of goodwill. He said the Surgery were still not being charged the full open market rent for the land so concluded that they were getting a good deal. Mr Lambert proposed sending a letter to the Practice Manager, by Recorded Delivery, stating the facts as above, Mrs Peacock seconded, 3 in favour, Mr Storey abstained as he felt the Council should meet the Practice Manager in person to explain the background to the charging of rent. Clerk to write to the Practice Manager.

27. Email from Cllr Terry Parish, Chair of BCKLWN Planning Committee re Major Modifications to the Local Plan – Cllr Parish’s email detailed his concerns that major modifications had gone too far and urged Parish Councils to make objections or observations to the proposed changes. Mr Lambert said this did not really affect Feltwell and Mr Storey agreed.

28. Insurance Renewal – Clerk advised the second-year contract renewal price of £1586.47.

CORRESPONDENCE

29. BCKLWN – Emails – Temporary Event Notices

30. NCC – Emails – **Press Releases:** Funding/support for WN Community Buildings. Black Dyke Road closure from junction with Corkway Drove 100m north-eastwards 15-16/8/24 for BT works

31. RAF Lakenheath – Email – **Notification of operations at RAF Feltwell:** 14/8/24, EOD explosive training, 9.30 am – 10.30 am; 22/8/24, EOD explosive operation, 3 x detonations, 9 am – 12 noon. **Other:** Thanksgiving Eve Service 27/11/24 Ely Cathedral, Yuletide Reception 5/12/24 Galaxy Club, RAF Mildenhall; Bio of Commander of the 48th Fighter Wing, RAF Lakenheath

32. Rural Services Network – Email – Bulletins

33. Brochures - Parish Magazine

34. **CHEQUES/PAYMENTS** – Mrs Arnold proposed approving September payments, Mr Lambert seconded, all in favour. Payments were approved and cheques signed for J Martin £86.30 (petty cash), S Sargent £98.40, D Wilkinson £45.80, R H Landscapes & Maintenance £936.00, K&M Lighting £150.00, PKF Littlejohn £378.00, Community Heartbeat Trust £146.34. Direct Debits to Biffa £237.62, British Gas £51.41, Vodafone £21.95. Standing Orders to K&M Lighting £100.21, J Martin £1082.38.

35. PLANNING

There were no planning applications.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

36. Highways – Clerk had reported the missing Vincent Close sign to Highways and the malfunctioning 30mph flashing speed signs along Lodge Road and Wilton Road.

37. Grass Cutting – Clerk circulated an email from the grass contractor asking if cutting could be stretched to three weeks now growing had slowed up. Councillors agreed but felt this should be monitored.

38. Street Light Bracket Survey & Electrical Inspection, Testing and Certification – Clerk said the bracket outside 40 Long Lane had been replaced and K&M were currently undertaking a review of the remaining brackets and an electrical inspection, testing and certification of Council street lights.

39. Feltwell in Bloom – Mr Lambert felt the situation with the stolen planters was a great shame as the planters look lovely and considered them to be an asset to the village. He suggested the Council offer some assistance, perhaps by purchasing two new ones.

40. Overgrown Greenery – Chair said the overgrown frontage of a privately-owned bungalow on Old Brandon Road should be reported to Borough Enforcement. Mr Storey reported a complaint regarding the hedge outside 2 Western Close growing over the pavement. Clerk had received a complaint about the front hedge of the Surgery along Wilton Road protruding the pavement. Clerk to direct this to Highways.

41. High Street Parking – Mr Storey said cars parking on the pavement at the front of the garage on High Street were obstructing vision for drivers exiting the Long Lane and Short Beck junctions.

42. Graveyard Complaint – Clerk said a complaint had been received from a resident whose grave reservation markers had been destroyed by the grass contractors. Mr Lambert said this should be directed to the Churchwarden.

43. Christmas Tree – Mr Storey and Mr Lambert said they would be happy to purchase the Christmas tree between them again this year. Chair thanked them both for this. Mrs Arnold said she was already decorating a tree for the Festival of Light this year so would not be able to decorate the Parish Council's. Theme this year is 'Films'.

44. Remembrance Sunday – Chair asked if the Parish Council could facilitate the road closure for the Remembrance Parade this year. Agreed in principle.

The next meeting is to be held on Monday 14th October 2024 at the British Legion at 7.30 pm.

Meeting declared closed 9.38 pm.