

The Meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday the 13th day of JANUARY 2025 at the Royal British Legion, Long Lane – commencing 7.30 pm

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Messrs Cole, Fenn, Lambert and Storey (arrived 8.25 pm), Mrs Arnold, Mrs McGeeney and Mrs Peckham.

APOLOGIES: Apologies were received from Mr Rayner, Mrs Edwards, Mrs Peacock and Mrs Wilson.

In the Chair's absence, Mr Lambert, as Vice-Chair, chaired the meeting. He 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: Minutes of the last Parish Council meeting were approved. Mr Cole proposed, Mr Fenn seconded, 4 in favour.

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD 16/12/24: Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting could not be approved as only three Councillors present had attended - carried forward to next meeting.

PUBLIC SPEAKING: No members of the public were present.

MATTERS ARISING

1. **RAF Feltwell** – Clerk read Sqn Leader's December report which stated above average night flying had taken place during November due to the unusual level of drone activity and thanked local communities for their understanding and support during this period. Flying of drones is an illegal activity and any drone flying in the permanent Flight Restricted Zone (FRZ) that surrounds RAF Lakenheath and RAF Mildenhall is also illegal without permission and residents should report any suspicious activity to the Police. A temporary FRZ is now in place around RAF Feltwell prohibiting unrestricted use of drones unless permission has been granted from the 24/7 MOD Police Control room. Some road safety improvements being funded by Suffolk County Council will take place during January and February. Mr Lambert said vegetation needed cutting back along Short Lane, Trenchard Square and Portal Close. Clerk is waiting to hear from the Chair regarding who to contact regarding Sqn Leader Eaton's lack of attendance.

2. **Risk Assessment** – **Weekly:** Handyman has cleaned graffiti from the teen shelter and cut back some of the brambles/bushes obscuring the entrance near the cub hut. Mrs Peckham said this needs doing further whilst the brambles are bare so agreed to meet with the Handyman and Clerk to look at this. Mr Storey has cut back brambles and bushes around the perimeter of the field. **Quarterly Inspection:** Carried out by Online Playgrounds on 2/12/24. A few items raised that are either Low or Very Low risk have been advised to the Handyman for attention.

3. **Balance Sheet** – No queries.

4. **Allotment Pest Control** – December report received. Mr Storey had discussed his concerns with the current contractor who said he would increase the bait. Clerk had obtained two quotes as requested but it was agreed for the Allotment Management Committee to monitor the current contractor's service and if no improvement, discuss the matter at an Allotment Committee meeting.

5. **NALC** – Updates circulated. Two special resolutions had been recommended for approval by the Board of Norfolk ALC on which Parish Councils were asked to vote: (1) That Norfolk ALC converts from a co-operative society to a company limited by guarantee and (2) that the services of legal expert Roger Taylor will be employed to carry out the conversion, ensuring all assets are

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

transferred to the new company limited by guarantee. Mr Lambert felt the Council did not have enough information on which to base a decision and all agreed. Mrs Peckham proposed casting no vote due to insufficient information, Mr Cole seconded, all in favour. Clerk to write to NALC.

6. Playing Field Boundary Wall – Continue to monitor wall. Mrs Peckham said the area was tidy.

7. Highways – 2 Oak Street: After continually chasing Mr Wallace, Clerk said he had advised earlier that day that the scheme had not yet been put forward. Mr Lambert will bring the protruding ivy on the wall of the Almshouses to the EdM Trust's attention. **Other matters:** 30mph flashing speed sign along Wilton Road had been repaired but the one on Lodge Road is beyond economical repair therefore Westcotec have submitted a report to NCC for a replacement. Clerk to enquire if one that flashes 'Thank You' to drivers keeping below the speed limit could be installed.

8. Overhanging Greenery – 50 Wilton Road: Mr Wallace will visit the owner. **Other matters:** Mr Wallace said following statutory notices to 2 Falcon Road to request cutting of the hedge, the owner will now be informed that Highways will undertake the work and recharge costs to them.

9. SAM2 Data – Chair wasn't present therefore no data was available.

10. Iron Bridge & Track – Anchor Ward – Ongoing.

11. Premises Licence – Fire Risk Assessment – Clerk awaiting date from Fenland Fire to install a 2kg carbon dioxide fire extinguisher outside the kitchen.

12. Damage to Playing Field Entrance, 2nd June 2024 – New gate/fence has been installed and Mr Lambert said a good job had been done.

13. Empty Freebridge Houses – Mrs Edwards was not present so no update was available.

14. Street Light Bracket Survey & Electrical Inspection, Testing and Certification – K&M have completed the bracket survey and recommended replacing two brackets at £105 + VAT. Mr Cole proposed K&M undertake this work at £105 + VAT per bracket, Mrs McGeeney seconded, all in favour. K&M have also completed the electrical inspection, testing and certification of the street lights and will forward test certificates in due course. Frith Blake's visual assessment of the concrete columns is ongoing.

15. High Street Parking – Clerk said Mr Allen had referred her to Mr Wallace on this matter therefore Clerk will arrange a site meeting with Mr Wallace and Councillors who are available.

16. Damaged Street Light at Mulberry Close – Mrs Peckham said the new street light was very dull, Clerk to contact K&M Lighting. DAC Beachcroft have requested a police report to obtain the third party's number plate or home address as he has failed to raise payment.

17. Age UK/Citizens Advice Event for Elderly – Clerk said Age UK had only just confirmed with Mrs Wilson their attendance for the event on 22/1/25. Clerk had advertised the event on Facebook and obtained a price of £51.81 + VAT from Lime Tree Printing for printing 200 of Age UK and BCKLWN 'Beat Your Bills' leaflets. Mrs McGeeney proposed printing the two leaflets at £51.85 + VAT, Mr Lambert seconded, all in favour. Clerk said Careline, The Food Pantry and Feltwell Community Group would also be attending.

18. Tree – Clerk said K&M would cut the tree beneath the street light on Lime Kiln Lane but won't remove cuttings so she has reported it back to Highways.

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

19. Street Light – Old style lantern on Old Methwold Road still to be replaced with LED.

20. To Consider Request from Grey's Funfair – No date yet.

21. To Discuss Budget & Precept 2025/26 – Clerk presented an updated financial report showing end of year balance forecast and how much Band D taxpayers would pay 2025/26 for a £50,000 to £60,000 precept in £2500 increments. 2024/25 precept was £50K but running costs alone this year have totalled approx. £45,000 and with National Insurance increasing and electricity costs rising, it was felt that a higher figure should be set. Mr Cole also felt it was time to start building a reserve for repairs to the war memorial garden wall. Mrs McGeeney proposed setting the precept at £60,000, Mr Lambert seconded, all in favour.

Mr Storey arrived at 8.25 pm.

22. Cllr Martin Storey Report – Mr Storey's report focused on the Government's intention to extend devolution of powers and funding, plus local government reform, across England. At the NCC meeting held 9/1/25, Councillors had voted in favour of applying to be part of the Government's priority programme for devolution in order move up the queue to obtain the best deal possible. Being on the programme could lead to postponement of County Council elections scheduled for May this year so that devolution and local government reorganisation plans could be developed. Mr Storey said devolution would bring the biggest change in decades and had strongly urged NCC to consult Norfolk residents at all stages. All news can be found on both Borough Council and NCC websites. **Other matters:** The roundels have been installed and Mr Lambert thanked Mr Storey for his continued efforts with this.

23. To Review Grass Maintenance Specification – Deadline for tenders is 31/1/25.

24. To Consider Request for New Street Light in Mulberry Close – Three Councillors had viewed the street light situation on Mulberry Close and could not see where the installation of another street light would benefit the residents without causing light pollution to others. Clerk to write to resident who submitted the request.

25. To Consider Request for New Bus Stop outside Manor Park Estate – Clerk awaiting a response from Robert Pratt.

26. Land Behind Feltwell Surgery – The Practice Manager had stated in an email last October that the Surgery would not be renewing the lease for the overflow car park when it expires this October. Several alternatives were discussed for use of the land and it was agreed that Mr Storey and Mr Lambert should meet with the partners to discuss this further. Clerk to contact Dr Sagar and the Practice Manager.

27. Feltwell in Bloom Report – Report was circulated and Councillors were happy with the proposals. It was felt that FiB were doing a good job and made great improvements to the village.

28. Broadband and Phone Line Contract Renewal – Clerk said current contract with Vodafone expired in December. She had contacted three providers but Vodafone had offered the cheapest rate at £24.38 + VAT/month on a rolling contract. Mr Cole proposed renewing with Vodafone, Mrs McGeeney seconded, all in favour. Clerk to renew with Vodafone.

CORRESPONDENCE

29. BCKLWN – Emails – Weekly Planning Applications & Decisions; W.Norfolk Economic Strategy - Economic Development Team update

CORRESPONDENCE (CONT)

30. NCC – **Press Releases:** CIL applications now open. **Road Closures:** Sedge Fen Road Southery 6-7/1/25 for Anglian Water works. **Other:** Next of kin appeals
31. RAF Lakenheath – Emails – **Notification of operations at RAF Feltwell:** 17/12/24 – 1 emergency demo operations, 2 shots from 9.45 am; 19/12/24, explosive training, 3 x detonations, 8.30 am – 3 pm. **Other:** Temporary flight restriction over Feltwell until the end of Feb
32. Rural Services Network – Email – Bulletins
33. Resident – Email – Copy of resident's email to Rt Hon James Wild MP. House of Commons re Parish Council voting
34. Amey – Email – Request for contact information
35. TWR Accountants – Email – January Tax Tips
36. Zurich Insurance – Email - Prepare for winter
37. Barclays – Letter – BSA interest rate reducing from 1.40% to 1.35% from 11/3/25
38. Tom Free Tree Services – Email – Promoting business
39. Brochures - Parish Magazine

40. **CHEQUES/PAYMENTS** – Mrs Arnold proposed approving the payments, Mr Storey seconded, all in favour. Payments were approved and cheques signed for J Martin £29.47, S Sargent £92.96, D Wilkinson £73.32, J Rolph £50.00, Norfolk Tractors £360.00, Peckham's Construction £2640.00, HMRC £412.13. Direct Debits to Biffa £209.16, URM £43.20, Vodafone £29.26. Standing Orders to K&M Lighting £100.21, J Martin £1082.38.

41. PLANNING

There were no planning applications.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

42. Changing Rooms - Clerk said two thermostats were not working in the Changing Rooms; one in the Away Changing Rooms and the other in the Official Changing Room. Clerk to contact CTE in the first instance as it could relate to recent work they carried out there.
43. CIL Funding – Clerk said the next round of funding was open until 1st February.
44. Hill Street – Concern was raised about the state of Hill Street.

The next meeting is to be held on Monday 10th February 2025 at the British Legion at 7.30 pm.

Meeting declared closed 9.35 pm.
