

The Meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday the 10th day of MARCH 2025 at the Royal British Legion, Long Lane – commencing 7.30 pm

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Messrs Cole, Fenn, Lambert, Rayner and Storey (arrived 8.23 pm), Mrs Peacock, Mrs Peckham and Mrs Wilson. Vikki Quamina, Community Liaisons Advisor at RAF Lakenheath and 3 members of the public were also in attendance

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

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: Minutes of the last Parish Council meeting were approved. Mr Cole proposed, Mrs Wilson seconded, 4 in favour. Mrs Arnold abstained having not been present.

PUBLIC SPEAKING: The meeting was suspended for 4 minutes for Public Speaking.

MATTERS ARISING

1. RAF Feltwell – Vikki Quamina read Sqn Leader Eaton's report. Temporary measures put in place for flying drones near military establishments expire 15/3/25 and approvals to extend them for a further 90 days are being sought. The best airmen and officers were recognised last month at the Wing's Annual Awards event. Vegetation from Portal Close protruding onto Moat Side properties has been cleared, the hedge along Long Lane will be cut this month and the overhanging tree from 7 Portal Close will be felled 28/4/25. Ms Quamina departed the meeting at 7.45 pm.

2. Risk Assessment – **Weekly:** Handyman has repaired the chains on the Multiplay unit but has struggled to tighten the loose bearing on the Arm & Pedal Bike (gym equipment) as highlighted in the inspection report. Clerk contacted Fresh Air Fitness who recommended their engineer undertake this work and quoted £185.62 + VAT. They also said the equipment was due for a service and quoted £344 + VAT for this including replacing the bearing. Councillors felt the equipment should be serviced therefore Chair proposed accepting their quotation of £344 + VAT, all in favour. The Handyman has further trimmed back trees near the cub hut entrance and Mrs Peckham said it was a good time to cut back all bare shrubs/branches around the outer perimeter of the field. All agreed, Clerk will speak to Handyman.

3. Balance Sheet – No queries. Chair will transfer funds from the BSA to cover payments this month.

4. Allotment Pest Control – February report received and an annual report supplied. Mr Lambert said it would be interesting to have a record of the number of vermin caught. Clerk to contact Mr Rolph. Vermin control is still being monitored at the allotments.

5. NALC – Updates circulated. Membership fee for 2025/26 will be £483.50. Clerk to ascertain if this includes the website and email hosting.

6. Playing Field Boundary Wall – Continue to monitor wall. Clerk said Zurich advised the file could easily be reopened if necessary as the original information will be held on file.

7. Highways – **2 Oak Street:** No response from Andy Wallace re timescale for the footway widening scheme. **Other matters:** Clerk will continue to pursue the replacement of the existing flashing 30mph sign on Lodge Road and had reported Southery Road again to Highways.

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

8. Overhanging Greenery – 50 Wilton Road: Hedge has still not been cut and no response from Highways when asked for an update. **Other matters**: Clerk wrote again to 2 Western Close but the hedge has still not been cut. As the hedge-cutting season is now over, Clerk will make a diary note for Highways to write to the resident in August. Letter sent to 33 Long Lane but the Laurel hedge belongs to 37A therefore Clerk will write to them, asking for their hedge to be cut back further at the next cut. Letter also sent to 41A Long Lane but hedge has not been cut.

9. SAM2 Data – Chair gave an account of SAM2 data collected over two weekends from 3/11/24 - 17/11/25 as follows; 21,138 vehicles drove past the SAM2 on Lodge Road, average speed was 27 mph and highest recorded was 60 mph. 11,297 vehicles drove past the SAM2 on Long Lane, average speed was 28 mph and highest 55mph at 11.50 pm. SAM2's are now located at The Beck and Paynes Lane.

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

11. Premises Licence – Fire Risk Assessment – Fire extinguisher and sign installed 25/2/25.

12. Damage to Playing Field Entrance, 2nd June 2024 – Sign has been installed. DAC Beachcroft said the third party's loss adjuster had requested an itemised breakdown of work from the contractor but had no response so a 90% settlement offer had been sent back to the loss adjuster. Clerk replied stating the contractors' invoices detailed all work carried out. Mrs Peckham asked what was happening with the footpath and Councillors will meet on site to discuss. Clerk to arrange.

13. Empty Freebridge Houses – Mrs Peckham felt this matter needed pursuing. Councillors to furnish Clerk with a list of empty houses so she can write to Freebridge. Mr Storey said he too would make some enquiries and Clerk will ask Cllr Adrian Lawrence to do the same.

14. Street Light Bracket Survey & Electrical Inspection, Testing and Certification – Concrete column assessment should be completed by the end of the month.

15. High Street Parking – Junction re-design scheduled for 2026.

16. Damaged Street Light at Mulberry Close – K&M quote for a higher wattage LED lantern came was £230 + VAT. Mr Lambert proposed purchasing a new lantern at £230 + VAT, Mr Cole seconded, all in favour. Clerk to contact K&M.

17. Age UK/Citizens Advice Event for Elderly – Mrs Wilson asked if a donation could be made to The Aisle Project who lent their facilities and supplied refreshments for the Age UK event. Mr Lambert proposed a donation of £50, Mr Fenn seconded, all in favour. Having received positive feedback, Mrs Wilson said she would speak to the Churchwarden about booking another Age UK event for September. Chair thanked Mrs Wilson for organising these events.

18. Tree – Handyman has cut back branches underneath the street light on Lime Kiln Lane and cut the ivy at the bottom of the lamp post on Long Lane. He said the hedge growing around the lamp post on Addisons was on private land. Mr Cole said it was difficult to tell due to the depth of the hedge. Although 8-9ft high, it was not affecting the light from the street light.

19. Street Light – Old style lantern on Old Methwold Road to be replaced when original repaired.

20. To Consider Request from Gray's Funfair – Clerk said new proposed dates are either 9th – 15th June or 23rd – 29th June. Councillors thought 9th – 15th would be better so Clerk will confirm with Mr Gray.

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

21. To Review Grass Maintenance Specification – Clerk said Mr Hamill had suggesting bringing forward the first cut due to the wet and dry weather. Mr Lambert thought this was a good idea and suggested he start mid-March. All agreed. Clerk to contact Mr Hamill.

Mr Storey arrived 8.23 pm.

22. To Consider Request for New Street Light in Mulberry Close – Clerk said the resident had not been at all happy with the Council's response. Mrs Peckham said she wouldn't mind speaking with the resident directly as emails can be easily misconstrued. Clerk said she would join her. All agreed.

23. To Consider Request for New Bus Stop outside Manor Park Estate – Clerk said the bus stop should be in place in 3-4 months' time.

24. Land Behind Feltwell Surgery – Councillors had been furnished with the solicitor's quote of £1500 + VAT to draw up a deed of Grant of Easement (to provide access over a parcel of land) and £1000 + VAT for a licence to occupy the car park. Upon Mr Lambert's suggestion, Clerk had contacted Barry Hawkins Land Agents who quoted approx. £260 + VAT for this work. Mr Hawkins said the agreement would be ongoing until either party terminated. It was agreed by all that this would be the best way forward. Chair said permission would need to be sought from the Secretary of State as the lease is not being renewed. Mrs Peckham said a letter should be sent to the partners of the Surgery in the first instance to ask if they would be agreeable to a deed of Grant of Easement. All agreed for Clerk to write to the partners of Feltwell Surgery.

25. Changing Rooms – Chair and Mrs Peckham to meet at the Changing Rooms to explore other heating options.

26. Hill Street – Clerk will write to Highways since the land does not belong to the resident.

27. Climbing Wall Opportunity – Clerk said the Facebook survey for a Climbing Wall and Target Practice had been very successful therefore, in collaboration with Finding Fitness, she had submitted an application to the National Lottery Community Fund and should have a decision in 12 weeks' time.

28. White-Lining – Clerk enquired to Highways but had no response.

29. Dog Bins – Clerk said Glasdon quoted £210 + VAT for a dog bin. It was queried whether a dog bin was necessary on Wilton Road and Councillors decided to shelve the idea for now.

30. Cllr Martin Storey Report – Following Norfolk's acceptance onto the Government's Devolution Priority Programme (DPP), Mr Storey said NCC are working with the Government towards an election for the Mayor of the Strategic Authority in May 2026. NCC elections planned for May 2025 will be postponed until May 2026. Final proposals must be submitted to Government on or before 21/3/25 and full proposal by 26/9/25. A public consultation is out now and Mr Storey urged all Councillors to have their say. On other matters, NCC agreed their budget on 18/2/25 and have a gross expenditure of £2.2bn. Hazardous waste days are planned for 4th/5th April at King's Lynn Recycling Centre and 25th/26th April at Thetford. Further information on this and other news can be found on both the Borough and County Council websites.

31. Review Allotment Terms of Reference – The Council felt the current terms were still valid therefore Mr Cole proposed readopting them, Mrs Arnold seconded, all in favour.

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

32. Review Financial Regulations – Clerk said NALC had updated their Financial Regulations last year and asked if the Council wished to adopt them. Clerk will go through NALC's version with Mrs Peckham and bring forward their recommendations.

33. Annual Playground Inspection – Clerk read out three quotations; Wicksteed £150 + VAT, The Play Inspection Company £245 + VAT and Safe Play £426 + VAT. The latter two companies class the equipment on the field as two sites so Clerk will confirm if Wicksteed's quote is correct.

34. Street Light Electricity Supply Renewal Quotes – Clerk had contacted numerous companies but only managed to obtain one quotation from the current provider SSE. They had quoted 24.10p/kWh, 24.36p/kWh and 24.42p/kWh for MPAN's ending 480, 718 and 992 respectively but could only offer contracts up to end July when the site will transfer to half hourly unmetered supply due to market-wide Half-Hourly Settlement required by the energy regulator Ofgem. Mrs Peckham suggested contacting the Borough and County Council to ask who they use, and also NALC. Contract expires end April so to be discussed at the next meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

35. BCKLWN – Emails – Weekly Planning Applications & Decisions; 'Your News'; Consultation on proposed devolution for Norfolk & Suffolk; KLWN Local Plan 2021-2040: Publication of Inspectors' Report; Cllr Jim Moriarty - KLWN Local Plan 2021-2040: Publication of Inspectors' Report; Temp Events Notice 24/01347/LA_TEN; Register of Electors Update; Promotional material for Government's devolution consultation; Members Allowances Independent Panel report for Parish Councils. **Press Release:** Borough Council Agrees Budget for 2025/26

36. NCC – Long Lane from Short Beck junction 50m westwards 4-6/3/25 for Anglia Water new connection works; Notification of extension of road closure until 7/3/25. **Press Release:** Public Information Notice: Next of kin appeal (Brian CHAMBERS)

37. RAF Lakenheath – Emails – **Notification of operations at RAF Feltwell:** 26/2/25 - Explosive operations, a single shot from a 12-gauge shotgun, 98 am – 12 pm.

38. Rural Services Network – Email – Bulletins

39. TWR Accountants – Email – March Tax Tips

40. Keep Britain Tidy – Email - The Great British Spring Clean!

41. Grasshopper Landscaping – Email – Promotion of service

42. Elevate Play – Email – Promotion of play products

43. Sovereign Play – Email – Promotion of play equipment

44. Caloo – Email – Promotion of play equipment and 10% discount

45. Brochures - Parish Magazine

44. **CHEQUES/PAYMENTS** – Mr Lambert proposed approving the payments, Mr Cole seconded, all in favour. Payments were approved and cheques signed for J Martin £102.37, S Sargent £136.80, D Wilkinson £61.82, John Rolph £150.00, Fenland Leisure Products £62.40, BCKLWN £1100.74, SSE £8413.88, Fenland Fire £80.10. Direct Debits to Biffa £180.48, British Gas £249.49, Vodafone £29.26. Standing Orders to K&M Lighting £100.21, J Martin £1082.38. Clerk advised Mr Palmer's cheque had been returned due to problems with a signature so Councillors had agreed via email to raise another cheque which was signed 1/3/25.

45. PLANNING

25/00324/CU: Change of Use from a Public House to a Mixed Use Community Centre, Café and Place of Workshop, 36 Hill Street, Feltwell – Several errors in the application were noted, i.e. the applicant does not own property, it is leased; it is not currently a café and community centre, it is a public house. The car park boundary is also incorrect. It was felt by all that the property should remain a public house – **7 against, Mr Lambert and Mr Storey abstained – OBJECT.**

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

46. Highways – Nasty pothole near Breckland Farms, Clerk to report. Query received regarding positioning billboards on pavements. A concern was also raised about residents parking on pavements in St John's Way when most of whom have adequate room on their driveways. Their vehicles, some of which are not taxed, are causing an obstruction for pedestrians as well as emergency vehicles and bin lorries. Although this is a Police and Highways matter, the Council would take forward any complaints about untaxed vehicles with the DVLA.

47. Request from the BCKLWN to fund a Community Information Point (CIP) – Correspondence received from BCKLWN advising they will cease funding CIPs as of 1/4/25 and asking if the Parish Council would fund them as TechSkills at NCC had no viable funding options. The CIP in St Mary's Church is very well used and overhead costs would be broadband and an anti-virus software, possibly totalling about £30/month. Mr Lambert said he wouldn't be against the Parish Council funding the CIP but Mr Storey said he would put this request to the Edmund de Moundeford Trust at a meeting in two weeks' time.

48. Bins – The Litter Picker had reported two bins that had not been emptied by the BCKLWN in the last few weeks. Clerk had spoken to their Clean Up team who assured her that Serco had been emptying them. As the Litter Picker was adamant they had not been emptied, Clerk was awaiting a further response from BCKLWN.

49. Request for Donation towards Year 6 Prom – Clerk read email from the Year 6 Prom Committee requesting a donation towards their cause in return for a village litter pick.

50. Tree Survey – Clerk felt a survey of the trees on the playing field ought to be carried out this year since the last one was undertaken back in November 2019.

51. Barclays Business Saver – Clerk had received notification that the interest rate was being reduced again from 1.35% to 1.25% as of 13/5/25.

52. National Living Wage – Clerk advised NLW was increasing to £12.21 as of 1/4/25 which would affect two members of staff.

The next meeting is to be held on Monday 14th April 2025 at the British Legion at 7.30 pm.

Meeting declared closed 9.45 pm.

Planning Applications received after the meeting with deadline before the next meeting:-

25/00249/F - Single storey extension on rear of existing two storey house, following removal of existing extensions, at Glenavon, 48 Wilton Road - 9 Councillors in favour. NO OBJECTION.