

LAKENHEATH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Lakenheath Parish Council Meeting held on Monday October 4th 2021.
Held at Lakenheath Methodist Chapel commencing at 7:00pm

Present

Councillors: E Morley (Chairman), R Norman, J Cahill, I Frost, J Gentle, A Gyte, P Gyte, J Hastings, G Kelly,
W Overy, S Palmer, Squadron Leader S Geary, M Flint (Clerk)

1

Apologies for Absence

Cllr S Frost (District)

2

Declarations of Interest

Cllr: A Gyte-Lakenheath Football Club

Cllr: P Gyte- Lakenheath Good Neighbours

Cllr: J Hastings-Lakenheath Keep Fit, Curling Club

Cllr: Overy- Keith Overy Commercials, Tina's Country Kitchen, Fenland Flowers

Cllr: Norman. Village Hall and Goward Evans Charity

Cllr: I Frost. Friends of Lakenheath Library

3

Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting held on 6th and 27th September 2021

Cllr Palmer reminded the clerk that he had attended the Extraordinary Meeting on 27th September 2021 and Cllr: P.Gyte pointed out a mistake on item 13 of the minutes on 6th September, the clerk had recorded Cllr: A Gyte rather than Cllr: PGyte. The clerk apologised and agreed to edit both sets of notes. It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the both Parish Council's meetings be accepted as a true record of the meeting and that they should be signed as such by the Chairman. Agreed by all.

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Representations from Members of the Public

There were none.

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(a)Police Matters Police-Police are appealing for information after entry was gained to vehicles parked on Eriswell Drive in Lakenheath. A vehicle parked on a driveway was entered between 00.01am and 3pm on Sunday 12 September. An Apple Mac Book Air and an iPad Pro were stolen. Police in Suffolk are supporting a week of road safety initiatives, which aim to highlight the dangers faced by vulnerable road users and reduce fatal and serious collisions. The week encompasses the following three campaigns:

The National Police Chiefs' Council Vulnerable Road Users Operation, which began yesterday, Monday 13 September, ,Project EDWARD (Every Day Without A Road Death), which ran until Friday 17 September, National Safe Speeds Day, lasting 24-hours from 7am on Wednesday 15 September

6	<p>Reports & Questions:</p> <p>a)RAF Commander Lakenheath- Squadron Leader Stewart Geary reported that in August the station was awarded the Commander in Chief Award, to celebrate the best station in the whole of the US Airforce for 2020. In September the station declared Initial Operating Capability for ACE. The Jets can be flushed from the station, lift, shift, to operate from different locations around the UK. During August 20 jets were flushed from Lakenheath. RAF Lakenheath was involved in the repatriation of individuals from Afghanistan, 70 medics were sent to Germany to support the repatriation at very short notice. In September SL Geary attended the 9-11 Memorial 20 years service. Holkwold Parish Council had invited Squadron Leader Geary to speak to them about the Armed Forces Covenant, there is a requirement for Parish Councils to discuss the Covenant and to sign up to the Covenant Pledge. Squadron Leader Geary is happy to attend a future meeting to give more details of the Covenant.</p> <p>Questions asked by Councillors</p> <p>Cllr: Norman Why are the jets flying over Woodlands Estate and not following agreed flight paths?</p> <p>Cllr: Hastings also mentioned the noise over the village in the last few weeks.</p> <p>Squadron Leader Geary asked for dates so that he could investigate.</p> <p>Cllr: J Cahill asked what the Covenant was?</p> <p>Squadron Leader Geary stated that he would rather explain in detail at a later date but that the Armed Forces Covenance ws a scheme set up to ensure that Armed Forces personnel were not disadvantaged because of their service.</p> <p>F35's are due to arrive before the end of the year and the F15's will start to be drawn down and should all be gone before the end of the financial year.</p> <p>Cllr: Morley asked for reassurance as to the American personnel are still following Covid restrictions as laid down by the British Government?</p> <p>Squadron leader Geary said the American Airforce are acting under stricter restrictions, including the wearing of face masks indoor and that all personnel are mandated to have the double vaccination.</p> <p>R. A. F. Lakenheath personnel that are on rapid special deployment do not isolate but are in and out of the base as necessary and this has always been the case.</p> <p>(b) West Suffolk District Council</p> <p>Nothing to report</p> <p>c) Suffolk County Council</p> <p>Nothing to report</p> <p>RAF Commander left the meeting 7.27pm</p>
7	<p>Financial Matters including: -</p> <p>(a) Payments of Accounts</p> <p>Clerk reported that she had made an error with her reimbursements for September/ October and had charged the Parish Council twice for some sticky labels and for the floor polish for the chapel. She did not notice the overpayment until she was entering the VAT into the cashbook when she realised that she had printed the invoices twice. On the 14th September she made a payment to the parish account from her personal account for £22.48 to rectify the over payment. The Parish Council accepted her apology and it was agreed to accept the payment of accounts as an accurate account of the payments for the month of September.</p> <p>(b) Bank Reconciliation for August</p>

8	<p>It was accepted that an accurate record of accounts and it was proposed and seconded that this be accepted as an accurate record of accounts. All agreed.</p> <p>(c) Second Quarter out-turn report</p> <p>There was some discussion on the out-turn report and the clerk explained how this was set out.</p> <p>(d) Annual Return Presentation / Acceptance of External Auditor's Review</p> <p>The External Auditor's Review was presented which reported that there were three exceptions which came to the auditors attention giving concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. The Clerk explained the reasons for the exceptions and it was proposed to approve and accept the annual return including the auditor's certificate. This as seconded and agreed by all</p> <p>Lakenheath Cemetery</p> <p>(a) To receive a Cemetery Report</p> <p>Cllr: I Frost reported that the cemetery railings were looking good, Chapel is looking good and floor has just been cleaned and sealed. The notice boards is relevant and tidy, the inner gates could do with refurbishing. Clerk explained that these would not be decorated at the moment as the Council had previously voted not to do them at this time. Grass is tidy, there is a slightly untidy hedge half way down the old section. The benches look neat and tidy and there is soap and paper in the public toilet. There is a gap in the hedge at the end of the cemetery. There are whips in place and they just need to grow.</p> <p>(b) To confirm Grant of Exclusive Rights of Burial</p> <p>Irma Wilks and David William George Berry</p> <p>(c) Security at cemetery</p> <p>Clerk reported that the Village Keeper has reported no further incidents since he has started padlocking the gates. Clerk met with Chris Hinton from Force8 and surveyed the cemetery, his suggestion is two cameras on the chapel one at the front which will be aimed at the gates and the driveway to the front of the chapel, and one on the side of the chapel looking down towards the graves, driveway and the back fence of the cottage. This will still protect the keepers family's privacy but will hopefully give some form of security to the site. The system would be run by a small box that will be boxed into the end pew in the cemetery and a sim which would send reports footage to parish office computer. The PC would need to supply a data sim for the system and the cost of running this would likely be £40 per week. Clerk is still waiting for the quote for installation of the equipment. However Village Keeper is not happy that Parish Council is to have control of the cameras and his father has given him a set of 4 camera's that he would like permission to place on the cottage, he would manage these himself. He feels that this would save the council money and also enable him to have control of the security in his home. This was discussed in detail and it was felt that it would not be appropriate for the Keeper to have control of the security footage due to GDPR and the Council voted that the Clerk would instruct the keeper that he does not have permission to install his own security system at the cottage or in the cemetery. It is felt very strongly that the security cameras are under the control of the Parish. This was proposed and seconded and agreed by all. Cllr: Gentle requested that the item is further investigated and agenda'd for next month. This was agreed by all.</p> <p>(d) Cottage Inspection</p> <p>Clerk is in the process of trying to find a company willing to carry out an annual inspection of the cottage, previously the letting agency in the High Street have done this but they are unwilling to do another inspection for PC. Clerk have tried several local estate agencies but as they do not manage the letting they are not prepared to carry out an inspection. It was agreed that Cllrs: Morley and Hastings</p>
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9	<p>would carry out the inspection and the Clerk would put together a checklist using the previous report as a template. Village Keeper has reported that the windows are very drafty and has asked if the council would consider replacing the windows. The PC felt that the inspection should take place before any work could be considered.</p> <p>(e) Cemetery Fee Annual Review</p> <p>The Councillors considered the annual review and a 10% rise and round up to nearest pound. This was proposed by Cllr: Cahill, seconded by Cllr: Kelly and agreed by all. Clerk was instructed to update the cemetery payment list and send out to all service users.</p> <p>(f) Change of hours for village Keeper.</p> <p>During his time at Brandon the Village Keeper worked different hours during the summer, longer hours in the summer and during the winter his hours were shorten to manage the darker nights, he has requested the council considers this? The council discussed this and the Chairman asked for each Councillor to give their view. The Council agreed as a whole agreed that currently the hours would not be changed this year and that that this could be considered in the Spring. It was proposed by Cllr A Gyte that the current hours are not changed and this was seconded by Cllr: Gentle and agreed by all.</p> <p>Planning Matters - To consider all outstanding Planning Applications and if necessary, any applications received after preparation of the agenda:</p> <p>Cllr: Kelly reported that an application received by the Planning Sub- Committee today is for 7 houses behind St Mary's Court which he trusts will not be allowed as the application for one property in the past have been rejected. Land West of Eriswell Road has gone out for consultation but there has been no date that he is aware of set for consultation . Lots of applications for removing trees and reducing trees.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Plan update:</p> <p>Cllr Kelly reported that the Neighbourhood Plan will not be sub-ordinate to the Local District Plan, not in any English law. The Local Plan has to be aware of and take account of the District Plan and the District Plan has to take note of the Local Plan. West Suffolk do not currently have a Local Plan, it is in preparation. Lakenheath does not have a Neighbourhood Plan as that is also in preparation . Last week Cllrs: Kelly and Norman attended a meeting and it was decided that the sensible thing is to develop both plans together except for one minor thing which is the target for next year (February) for the NP is no longer realistic as the next part of the local plan will not be available until Dec 2021.</p> <p>Cllr: Kelly further reported that the development of the gym facility could be hosted by the Playing Fields Association, the cost would be in the region of 16k and at the moment that could be raised by grants, but that the shortfall may be between 4-6k which could be granted by the Parish Council. The playing fields would need to apply for a grant from the Parish Council. Cllr: A Gyte mentioned that every year the PC gives the playing field Association 4k. The clerk pointed out that under S.19 the Playing Field Association can apply for a grant from the Parish Council but no figure is guaranteed and it is wrong to suggest that the PC give the Playing Fields Association 4k every year as it will be up to the full council to consider the grant application and decide how much if anything is awarded. Cllr: Morley agreed with Clerk and stated that the money if awarded would need to be applied for and should not be taken as in the bag. Cllr: A Gyte stated that the Playing Fields Association are not VAT registered and the Parish Council is, therefore if the Parish Council brought the equipment they could afford to have more equipment than if the Playing Fields brought the equipment and also that the Christian Enterprise cannot grant to the Parish Council, it may be the Playing Fields take on the project and get</p>
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10	<p>the funding and then we buy it for them. The Clerk asked who will the equipment belong to? Cllr: Kelly said this is still to be decided. Cllr: Gentle asked how long the lease was still to run for the playing fields? Cllr: Gyte stated he did not know and that Cllr: Gentle said is the whole problem, you don't know. Cllr: Kelly reminded Cllr: Gentle that there was no proposal on the table currently.</p> <p>Cllr: Kelly reported that the Sedge Fen Community Facility/Hub was still ongoing as no one is sure who owns the building or where they are.</p> <p>Cllr: P Gyte reported that she has an email from Highways that states that as Eriswell and Station Road are B class roads they would expect then to be used by HGV 's and therefore vertical traffic calming treatments would not be encouraged due to the noise and vibration issues. However, things that can be considered are entry treatments/gateways, carriageway speed limit roundals except in 30mph streetlit areas. Road narrowing, priority systems, general signing and road markings and SIDs. So contrary to what reported to the PC in May 2021 it seems that SCC does have a traffic calming system in place. Hepworth Town Council is currently in the process of putting together a plan for traffic calming and their County Councillor Joanne Spicer is spearheading the project and it has been implied that without the backing of our County Councilor Colin Noble it will be very hard for Lakenheath to get this up and running. Cllr: P Gyte will be contacting both CC Joanne Spicer and Highways to push ahead.</p> <p>Cllr: Kelly reported that there will be a meeting with local business leaders to push ahead with plans to form a group and also to look at a farmers market for Lakenheath. Cllr: Overy reported that she has written an article for the Lakenheath Times to inform parishioners about the upcoming meeting and invite them to take part.</p> <p>Cllr: Cahill reported that the meeting she had over the warren with West Suffolk Council was very useful they are going to be looking at various things on that can be fixed on the warren such as signs. She has contact with Richard /Martin who is a tree man who says that it may be possible to put a tree on Briscoe Way but that the tree must conform to the size that they require and cannot be a whip.</p> <p>Cllr: Kelly reported that there was a misunderstanding in regards to the litter pick this time round and it turned out it was because it was agreed that last time the it was discussed the full council would agree a date. Cllr: Kelly requested that going forward that Cllr: Cahill has permission to arrange 4 litter picks a year as and when she feels the need is there. This was proposed by Cllr Kelly and seconded by Cllr: A Gyte. All agreed.</p>
11	<p>Remembrance Day Parade</p> <p>Clerk reported that the parade will take place this year on the 14th November and it has been agreed that the band will march from the Dripping Tap to the War Memorial and there will then be an outdoor service at 2.30pm. The War Memorial is 100 years old this year so it is felt that it would be a great idea to hold the service at the memorial.</p>
12	<p>War Memorial</p> <p>The clerk reported that she has contacted several companies to get a quote for the cleaning of the memorial and the repainting of some of the names engraved. Many of the companies that have been contacted with are not taking on any more business at the moment as they are too busy but have had a positive response from Borton Wood and Son who are happy to quote for the work. The clerk is waiting for the quote and realise that we are now in a situation that when the quote arrives there will not be time for the council to instruct her before the next meeting and get the work done. It was proposed by Cllr:P Gyte that delegated powers be given to the clerk and the chair to consider the quote and go ahead if the cost is reasonable. This was seconded and all agreed.</p>

13	<p>Saint Mary's Church Wall update</p> <p>Work has started on St Mary's Church wall and Tom Rought has completed a 3 metre stretch which looks great, however he actually quoted for a 4 metre stretch of wall and when he invoiced, The clerk contacted him to question when he will carry out the final metre. This work should be completed in the next couple of weeks and at that time his colleague will replace the buttresses</p>
14	<p>Village Noticeboard Sedge Fen</p> <p>Cllr: Overy reported that the Sedge Fen noticeboard has been delivered and that Kevin Flack will be collecting it and erecting it this week.</p>
15	<p>Toilets Cleaning and Opening/Closing</p> <p>Village Keeper has informed Clerk that he no longer wishes to open and close the toilets on a Sunday as it means that he does not get a lay in all week and he has asked that we find someone else to do this from the first week in October. Village Keeper is happy to continue to open and close on a Saturday. The toilets could be left closed on a Sunday, alternatively we can advertise for someone to open and close the toilets for an hourly rate or in the short term the Clerk will do this task for the same hourly payment that VK was receiving. Councillors discussed at length and agreed that the Clerk should put an advert in the Lakenheath Times for a self employed person to open and close the toilets on both weekend days and the task be removed from Village Keeper to allow him to have his weekends free from work. Clerk explained that he was only looking to stop the Sunday opening to allow himself one days rest. However the council felt that the role would be more appealing to someone if they were offered both shifts. Clerk was instructed to speak to the VK and inform him of the councils decision and ask him to continue to open the toilets on a Sunday until the replacement is found.</p> <p>During the lock down, some of the invoices from Sunrise Cleaning were not received at the Parish Office. The owner has apologised for this but explained that this was a very busy time and she also had a close family bereavement, now that she is more back on top of things, she has reconciled her books and sent out an email with regards to the outstanding payments to several of her clients. The Clerk has checked last years bank statements and also our payment list against the invoice and it appears that the Parish Council owe sunrise cleaning £830.30, It was proposed by Cllr: Gentle that this was paid and this was seconded and agreed by all.</p>
16	<p>Professional emails for Councillors</p> <p>Clerk reported that she had received to quotes for email storage: Bright Motif 12x3gb email addresses it would currently be an annual cost of £239.88. the email address would be @ lakenheath.org</p> <p>Town and Parish Council Websites Up to 12 email accounts: £60 set-up plus £240pa annual storage and maintenance charge. This includes 240MB storage for each account. To register a domain name (org.uk/org.co.uk). There would be an additional charge of £20pa. For example, lakeheathpc.org.uk</p> <p>The Council considered both quotes and it was proposed that they would accept the Bright Motif quote for £239.88 annually . The Clerk was actioned to set up the accounts. Cllr: Morley (Chair) and Cllr Gentle declined to have professional accounts and this was noted by the Clerk.</p>

17	<p>Clerk reported that she had been contacted by a parishioner who had concerns that there was a gap in the fencing at the play park and this could be a safety issue if children were able to get through and could end up on the road. Clerk reported that this item was first discussed in Jan 2020 and it was agreed at the time that a piece of fence would be made to fit the gap. Unfortunately this did not happen partly because the park was closed at the beginning of Covid due to Government Guidance and also as the tradesman who had been contracted had a family bereavement. Clerk spoke last week to Mr Kevin Flack who has erected two posts and some fencing to plug the gap,.Clerk has written to Parishoner and thanked Cllr: Norman for his help with this as the item was brought up before her employment with the Parish started and therefore she had not historical knowledge of the problem.</p> <p>Items for Future Meetings, Security at the Cemetery.</p>
18	<p><i>The Council may wish to consider excluding members of the public due to the confidential nature of the next item.</i></p>
19	<p>Appointment of new Clerk, Contract and Salaries</p> <p>The Chairman, Cllr: Morley reported to the council that an Assistant Clerk had been appointed and that although she was flexible in the main she would be working 2x 5 hours a day. The new assistant would be also covering for Clerk Flint's Holidays and any sick leave. The Senior Clerk would now revert to 30 hours a week and the Chair thanked her for her flexiablity at a very busy time. As the Senior Clerk would be line managing the Assistant Clerk a raise in salary was proosed and agreed by all Councillors. The Clerk thanked the Councillors for their consideration.</p>
20	<p>Such other business which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered as a matter of urgency. There was none</p> <p>To note date of next Meetings - Monday 1th November 2021</p>
	<p>There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.51pm</p> <p>Sign Date</p> <p>CHAIRMAN</p> <p>Signed as confirmation that they are a true record.</p>

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