

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF LAKENHEATH PARISH COUNCIL

HELD AT THE METHODIST CHURCH CHAPEL ON MONDAY 5th SEPTEMBER 2016.

Present: - Messrs E Morley (Chairman)

D Durrant

Mrs Gyte

R Norman

Mrs Whitehand

J Gentle

Mrs Brown

Cllr Edwards FHDC, Lesley-Ann Keogh FHDC, Rachael Mann FHDC, Peter Gudde FHDC and 2 members of the public were also present.

The Chairman opened the meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence

Councillors Gathercole, Lucas, Marston and Frost.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Gyte – Lakenheath Good Neighbours, Trustee Lakenheath Peace Memorial Hall and Trustee Lakenheath Consolidated Charities.

Cllr Whitehand – Lakenheath Junior Youth Club, Lakenheath Carnival and Lakenheath Playingfields Association.

Cllr Durrant – James Waters Ltd

Cllr Brown – Treasurer Lakenheath Youth FC and Volunteer, Peace Memorial Village Hall.

3. Police Matters

There were none.

4. Confirmation of Minutes of Meetings held on 1st August 2016

It was proposed to accept minutes. All present at the meeting of the 1st August agreed.

The Chairman asked for the agenda to be varied. All agreed.

6. Reports from:-

(a) Forest Heath District Council to include

ii. Celtic Cross

The clerk said that Cllr Marston had given her apologies but reported that she had been in conversations with the action group, Friends of Lakenheath Warren regarding the Celtic Cross and others pieces of the Warren. Cllr Marston should have more to report next month.

iii. Dog Waste Bin – Roebuck Drive

Cllr Brown requested that FHDC be approached to add a dog waste bin by the footpath sign that points towards the water reservoir at the top of Maidscross Hill. She said that it seemed a logical location as many people enter and exit the Warren at this point with dogs. It was proposed. All agreed.

Resolution – Clerk to contact FHDC regarding a new dog waste bin by the footpath sign on Maidscross Hill.

(b) Suffolk County Council

The clerk said that there had been some confusion with Cllr Marston over Cllr Noble's attendance tonight. Cllr Noble has asked to attend the November meeting. All agreed.

Cllr Brown said that grass cutting seems to be very slack this year. A constant complaint is the small piece of ground on the left as you go up Wings Road from the High Street. She added that generally, throughout the area many road signs cannot be read due either to long grass or unkempt hedges.

The clerk said that she had reported the weeds on Wings Road and had received a response from SCC to say that weed killer had been sprayed around the village, finishing Sunday 4th September and that it could take up to two weeks to take effect.

Cllr Brown asked for the matter to be reported to SCC again.

Cllr Durrant said that the hedge on the corner of Wings Road and Mill Road was still overgrowing the footpath.

The chairman said that the hedge on the corner of North Road was overgrowing the footpath.

Resolution – Clerk to accept Cllr Noble's offer to attend the November meeting to present on transport.

Action Point – Clerk to report weeds and overgrown hedges to SCC.

7. Matters Arising from Minutes not elsewhere on the Agenda

There were none.

8. Planning Matters:-

(a) To receive report from Planning Committee

(b) To consider any other outstanding applications and matters including Lakenheath Hall

Cllr Brown gave her report:

Applications supported

1. DC/16/1405/HH - 22 Wingfield Road, Lakenheath - single storey extension on north elevation
2. DC/16/1621/HH - Single storey side extension (following demolition of existing garage) - 13 Pashford Close, Lakenheath
3. DC/16/1671/HH - (i) two storey side extension, (ii) raising of roof to create first floor rooms over existing and (iii) 2 bay cart lodge with attached garage - 104 Undley, Lakenheath

Supported with reservations

1. DC/16/1233/FUL - 37 Eriswell Road, Lakenheath - Planning Application - 1no. dwelling with detached garage and associated vehicular access. We originally supported this case with many conditions. FHDC turned it down, this was supported at appeal to PINS. Amendments have now been put in place to overcome those objections, which we have now supported with conditions.

Applications not supported

1. DC/16/1336/FUL & DC/16/1360/OUT- Land at Little Eriswell Road From A1065 To Norfolk County Boundary Eriswell Suffolk - Planning Application - (i) Provision of balancing ponds adjacent to the Cut-off Channel (ii) Use of existing Woodlands as public open space and Outline Planning Application (Means of Access to be considered) - (i) Up to 550 dwellings (ii) Primary School (iii) Retail unit (iv) Associated open and play space, allotments, landscaping and infrastructure works - The planning sub-committee agreed that they cannot comment on the main development, as it is outside the parish of Lakenheath. However we are prepared to support the decision and representation made by Eriswell Parish Council.

2. DC/16/1436/FUL –2 No dwellings (following demolition of existing outbuilding/garage) with associated vehicular access - 42 Mill Road, Lakenheath - too large for the area, overlooking the school grounds as intend to use 3 floors and out of character.

Application in circulation

1. DC/16/1744/HH- Householder Planning Application - enlargement of existing rear dormer - 21 Gorse Close, Lakenheath

Delegation case

Lakenheath Parish Council objected to the proposal for a Japanese restaurant where Wortleys dairy used to be. The main reasons were that it is in the conservation area and that we have many takeaways at present in the village. Can we really support another to the detriment of other possible retail outlets? The drive-way for rear parking is also close to the current zebra crossing. Planners want to approve the case. A consequence is that it is to be decided at delegation tomorrow afternoon. I asked our District Councillor last Thursday and again today to reiterate our concerns but await confirmation that she can do so. At this stage she is the only person who can speak out for us.

Now onto the **major developments** - Last month FHDC brought the Pigeon application to committee. It was our own District Council member who proposed the resolution to progress the 'Outline Planning Consent' for the building of 375 dwellings and a second Primary School for Lakenheath on the Station Road North site, subject to a whole range of conditions. No doubt a full application will soon follow including detail for the proposed school on the site. In the meantime, the parish council had made a request to the Secretary of State to call in the case. This was placed on hold until such time as the case came to committee. We have now heard that the Secretary of State has decided not to do so. He is content that it should be determined by the local planning authority.

At committee, representations from the DIO on behalf of the MOD were ignored by members. The result is that the DIO on behalf of the MOD have appealed this decision. It is their contention that the planning application falls within the criteria for call-in, as an application that "may involve the interests of national security or of foreign governments". At the same time they have asked for all cases to be considered together as each case is effected by the operations at RAF Lakenheath.

Finally, we have received re-consultation request for the Maidscross Hill/Broom Road/Covey Way proposal where a fresh application has been made reducing the number of dwellings from 132 to 110. Please can we have a planning subcommittee meeting to discuss this Thursday next week?

Lakenheath Hall. We still await a revised planning application for the larger dwellings.

Tesco Site. Nothing further to report at this time.

Hatchfield Farm Enquiry. The long awaited decision has now been received. The Inspector recommended that outline planning permission be granted as proposed by FHDC. However, the Secretary of State disagreed with that recommendation and he has decided to refuse outline planning permission. Our Clerk has emailed you all a copy of the full decision.

Notwithstanding this FHDC have now stated that the Secretary of State's decision gives them an opportunity to ask Government for the investment in infrastructure that befits a centre of national economic importance. This should allow for the continued growth of the racing industry in Newmarket while also recognising and providing for the needs of other businesses in the area. The wheels for this have been put in motion. It is a shame they do not place the same importance on the fact that we have a NATO base on our doorstep. Obviously horses are more important than defence.

Enforcement. The new Pizza house opposite the church has created several complaints relating to the garish sign writing and possible illumination. They have been put in place without planning consent and are now being investigated by enforcement. It was also reported to enforcement the state of the front area, two driveways north. The result is that this has been cleared up.

I will attend the SALC meeting this Thursday and the Town and Parish Forum next Wednesday which is Planning Focused.

Cllr Durrant asked what the route was going forward, would the Parish Council carry on with legal support.

Cllr Brown said that the DIO are very unhappy that their representation was not considered properly by committee. They subsequently applied again on Friday to call in the application and asked that all applications are looked at together to keep costs to a minimum.

Cllr Durrant asked what the Parish council's stance was on a new school.

Cllr Brown said that if all the development proceeded then yes a new school was needed. The DIO being involved in all applications may mean that no school is needed. The existing school was not oversubscribed this year.

The clerk said that the property in Woodlands had been reported for possible commercial use and is being investigated by enforcement.

Cllr Gentle reported that the grass was being cut at Lakenheath Hall.

6. Reports from:-

(a) Forest Heath District Council to include

i. Toggam/Solar Farm - Presentation & Questions - Cllr Edwards & Rachael Mann FHDC and Thomas Clayton

Rachael Mann (RM) said that fundamental members of the project were present although there was lots of external input. She added that the offer to visit the site was still open.

Peter Gudde (PG) said that it had been a two year project to help deliver a community energy plan. There are a suite of projects, after an energy plan was adopted in November 2014. The District Council (DC) need to address their financial situation and act more commercially. Although historically non-trading, they need to move into business to generate value. The project would generate local energy although at present it cannot be used locally. The DC will now lobby for change and work with the Big 6 energy companies. The potential is to use the electricity to run council assets and facilities, help families and communities and help local economic growth. This is a stepping stone towards that goal and will help to offset grid electricity which is produced on fossil fuel.

RM explained	Share Capital Purchase	£14.062m
	Due Diligence & Project Management Work	£ 0.338m
	Stamp Duty	<u>£ 0.071m</u>
		£14.471m

These funds could not be used for day to day funds.

In year rate of return 8% (at year 5, before cost of borrowing)

Revenue Income	£300k year 1
	£500k by year 5
	Over £700k by year 10 after capital payback

Cllr Edwards said with budget gaps, there was a need to make capital work. Bank interest was paid at 0.5 - 0.75%. To make the capital work the DC had also invested in Omar Homes in Brandon, securing jobs. The solar farm project will generate electricity for 3000 houses and in emissions is the equivalent of taking 2000 cars off the road. There is also the future possibility of grazing sheep under the panels.

It was confirmed to Cllr Gyte that the capital funds could not be used to plug the financial gap but that it can be invested to generate income. With the possible end result to buy energy direct from the DC.

PG said that there could be a tariff for business to buy the electricity, which was moving forward with growing consensus.

Cllr Brown said that the land was being leased from Greenheath. She asked why the money was being invested in land that was not owned. What precautions were in place at the end of the 25 year lease?

RM said that the DC would own the land for 25 years. With an option in the lease to extend 5 years at a time with protection from the Landlord and Tenant Act. The project had been assessed on the initial 25 year term, with full recovery of capital and a healthy return.

Cllr brown said that she understood the agreed feed in tariff lasted for 20 years only.

PG said that it may then be possible to sell as a commodity.

Cllr Gentle said that the money had been invested in contaminated land and that it would need an environmental check before grazing livestock.

RM said that the land had planning permission and that protection and assurances are given in the contract. Compensation is payable if it doesn't happen. The 25 year risk was accepted by members.

Cllr Gentle asked about the capital return.

RM said that income of £1m would be generated annually, allowing £300k to be put back into capital.

Cllr Whitehand asked who owned the land and who would benefit.

Cllr Edwards said that the funds would go to fund the £1m gap for everyday services. Government grants are reducing and if this wasn't used to help fund the gap, services would have to be cut.

RM said that the £14.5m didn't stop other projects being considered. The DC now own Greenheath Energy Ltd with FHDC as shareholder.

Cllr Norman asked if Lakenheath would get cheaper electricity. He added that there is a misconception that the base get the electricity, as FHDC had not explained that the electricity is actually going into the substation in Eriswell.

Cllr Gyte said that this is how it gets into the main grid.

Cllr Brown suggested an article for the Lakenheath Times.

PG agreed and said that he hoped one day, future opportunities could mean that it would provide electricity to the local area.

Cllr Brown suggested showing the local community how it could help.

Cllr Gyte suggested an article in the Lakenheath Times explaining how the project will work and the finances involved, so that the community have accurate information.

PG agreed to do this.

Cllr Gentle said that this was not the first commercial project by FHDC and others had lost money.

5. Representations from Members of the Public

Mr Rolph expressed concerns over the free site for the school on Station Road. He went on to say that apparently the solar farm would make up to £500k pa although differing figures were given. He asked if everyone was reading from the same hymn book. He said that it was built due to grants and subsidies and that the electricity would be sold to the national grid. He said that it was too late now as the deal had been done. He asked if sheep could damage the panels and what maintenance was covered. He asked why the money wasn't put into building new affordable houses and that the public should have known more about it.

A resident said that she was quite surprised how it had been presented and asked how it compared with other councils.

PG said that there were 5 other DC sites in the UK including Telford.

The chairman thanked the representatives of Forest Heath District Council and they left the meeting.

9. Lakenheath Cemetery

(a) To receive a Cemetery Report

Cllr Durrant said that he had visited the cemetery both Sunday and Monday. Other than the bunker being full, all is neat and tidy. He added that on Sunday the three graves were clear and the mower could get down. However, a large pot was back today. He agreed to visit the family before the next meeting. He asked if someone else could be used to empty the bunkers.

The clerk said that she had chased to have the bunker emptied and would investigate other contractors.

Action point – Clerk to investigate alternative contractors to empty cemetery bunkers.

(b) To confirm Grant of Exclusive Rights of Burial

There were none.

(c) Hedge Cutting

The clerk said that she had checked the quotation for hedge cutting and it had not included the eastern side in the new cemetery. CGM advise that it has grown too large to be a hedge. If it was cut down to 1.8m it would look ugly and take a number of years to establish back into a hedge. They have suggested a crown lift to full height and to push back the overgrown hedge to match the already trimmed and managed section. This along with cutting the exterior and top along Maids Cross Way is quoted at £2,880 + VAT.

Councillors agreed that it seemed a very good price and it was proposed to accept the quotation without the need for an additional two. All agreed

The clerk said that work on the trees in the old section would be carried out week commencing Monday 19th September and hopefully this work would be done at the same time.

Resolution – CGM Group quotation of £2,880 + VAT to cut hedges on Maids Cross Way and eastern side of cemetery accepted without the need for a further two quotations.

10. Financial Matters including:-

(a) Payments of Accounts

It was proposed to accept expenditure as listed and all agreed.

Chq No.	Payee	Description of Supply	Amount
3596 to 3600	Staff	August Salaries, Income Tax, NI & Pension and Redundancy	£6736.79
3601	Lakenheath Peace Memorial Hall	Parish Office - 01.04.2016 to 30.09.2016	£1072.54
3602	BDO LLP	Review of the Annual Return	£480.00
3603	Anglian Water	Public Conveniences - Wings Road	£70.27
3604	John Bartholomew	Boiler Service - Cemetery Cottage	£81.80
3605	BT Payment Services	Telephone & Broadband	£55.32
3606	County Graphics (Norfolk) Ltd	Lakenheath Times - June & July Editions	£800.00
3607	Land Registry	Registration of land at Maids Cross Hill	£30.00
3608	Central Garage	Bulb	£7.20
3609	Suffolk Prestige Security	Cemetery Alarm System Maintenance	£90.00
3610	G & J Peck Ltd	Mower Belt & Blade	£200.82
3611	RST Irrigation Ltd	Replace Belt & Blade on Mower & Mower Repairs	£162.88
3612	Bussens & Parkin (2015) Ltd	Padlocks	£10.36
3613	County Graphics (Norfolk) Ltd	Lakenheath Times - August Edition	£400.00

(b) Bank Reconciliation

A bank reconciliation for 31st July 2016 was presented. It was proposed to accept and all agreed.

11. Future Grant Funding Requests

The clerk said that previous grant opportunities had been missed due to suggestions being made too near to deadlines. She added that the Tesco grant scheme is now available on a rolling basis and asked for suggestions.

Cllr Durrant suggested skatepark additions.

Cllr Gyte said that the Playingfields Association had already discussed this with Lesley-Ann Keogh.

Cllr Brown suggested an adult keep fit area.

Cllr Whitehand agreed that an outside gym would be good and also suggested new bus shelters.

Cllr Durrant asked how sites for bus shelters would be decided over others.

Cllr Whitehand suggested a bench on Wings Road.

Cllr Durrant asked about a bench beside the village sign.

The Chairman said that there had been a bench there previously but that it had to be removed due to ASB.

It was proposed to table for October's meeting to allow for all Councillors to consider options.

Resolution – Grant Funding Requests tabled for October. All Councillors to consider options.

12. Public Footpaths – Cutting

The clerk said that the matter of overgrown footpaths was one of the main reasons of complaint received in the parish office. She said that she had reported to SCC the footpaths, Broom Road to Caudle Avenue and Maids Cross Way to Broom Road a number of times and although acknowledged, no action had been taken.

Cllr Durrant said that the strimmer should be used not the mower.

It was proposed for the village keeper to cut the footpaths with the strimmer as he had time. All agreed.

Cllr Gyte said that the island on Woodlands is also very untidy.

It was proposed that the clerk write to Bennett Homes to ask them to tidy up the island. All agreed.

Cllr Gyte said that the Parish Council needed to keep parishioners up to date.

The clerk said that she produces an Annual Report which covers all achievements for the year.

It was proposed to publish the Annual Report in the Lakenheath Times. All agreed.

Cllr Durrant suggested a 'you spoke, we listened' column in the Lakenheath Times.

Cllr Brown said that she would add a couple of lines to her planning report this month.

Resolution - Village keeper to cut footpaths with the strimmer as time permits.

Resolution - Clerk to write to Bennett Homes to ask them to tidy up the island in Woodlands.

Resolution - Annual Report to be published in the Lakenheath Times

Action point – Cllr Brown to add a couple of lines regarding footpaths to her monthly planning report.

13. Children's Play Area - Tarmac/Drain Repairs

The clerk said that the drain covers in the children's play area are constantly being lifted by children and replaced by the village keeper. She has asked Kevin Flack to have a look at the drains and suggest a way forward. She will report back to the next meeting.

Action Point - Clerk to report back on children's play area drain repairs.

14. Register of Interests - Reminder to keep updated

The clerk reminded all Councillors to keep their Register of Interests up to date.

15. Parking Enforcement

Cllr Brown said that the police had decriminalised parking. Proposals were discussed at the Town & Parish Forum on what action to take. She asked for the item to be discussed at October's meeting.

Action point – Parking Enforcement tabled for October.

16. Village Sign

The clerk said that she was meeting with Kevin Flack this week to discuss new curb stones along the footpath. She will report back to the next meeting.

Action Point - Clerk to report back on new curb stones along village sign footpath.

17. Speed-Watch & Vehicle Activated Sign

Cllr Gyte reported that after some 9 months, the speed-watch team were trained yesterday. They are in possession of a speed radar detector, 3 high viz jackets, 2 batteries, 1 charger and 2 signs. All four sites have been passed and sessions will start in October. She said that she will write an article for the Lakenheath Times advising that it is to educate drivers, not to catch them out. A few cars were recorded at 47mph and repeat offenders will be recorded by the coordinator.

The chairman commended Cllr Gyte's hard work.

Cllr Norman reported that the police had also caught four speeding vehicles last week.

Cllr Gyte said once the scheme got going, other sites could be applied for.

18. HM the Queen's 90th Birthday - Commemorative Trees

The clerk had received a number of suggestions for commemorative trees around the village.

Cllr Brown asked if it could be a commemorative bench with a plaque instead. Older residents would like one positioned on Wings Road. She asked if any locality budget was available from District or County.

Action Point – Clerk to investigate commemorative benches and possible support from locality budgets.

The Chairman asked for the agenda to be varied. All agreed.

20. Items for Future Meetings

- Parking Enforcement
- Grant Funding Requests
- Lakenheath Surgery
- Children's Play Area - Tarmac/Drain Repairs
- Village Sign Area
- Street Lighting
- Policing
- Wings Road Public Conveniences - Roof Repairs
- HM the Queen's 90th Birthday - Commemorative Bench/Trees

21. Such other business which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered as a matter of urgency

There was none.

22. To note date of next Meeting – Monday 3rd October 2016

Members of the public were asked to leave the meeting.

19. Village Keeper review*

The clerk read a letter of thanks from the part-time village keeper.

There followed discussion on roles that required attention when the village keeper was on holiday.

Cllr Whitehand and the clerk agreed to cover the first holiday.

Cllr Durrant suggested that it was then on a rota basis.

Action Point – Cllr Whitehand and the clerk to cover tasks during the village keeper's first holiday.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:50 pm.