

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF LAKENHEATH PARISH COUNCIL

HELD AT THE METHODIST CHURCH CHAPEL ON MONDAY 6th NOVEMBER 2017.

Present: - Messrs E Morley (Chairman)

J Gentle	Mrs Brown
I Frost	Mrs Lucas
R Norman	Mrs Gyte
W Newman	

Sqdn Ldr Neild and 5 members of the public were also present.

The Chairman opened the meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Whitehand, Durrant and Hastings.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Brown - Treasurer Lakenheath Youth FC

Cllr Frost - Friends of Lakenheath Library Trustee

Cllr Gyte – Lakenheath Good Neighbours & Lakenheath Consolidated Charities

Cllr Lucas – Sutton Services Ltd (Elveden Estates) & Playingfield Committee

Cllr Norman – Village Hall

The chairman asked to vary the agenda and all agreed.

6. Reports & Questions:-

(a) RAF Commander Lakenheath

Sqdn Ldr Neild apologised for not making the last meeting. He has been made aware of and is working with complainants and others. Email problems meant that the Parish Council's concerns were only received on Friday which coincided with a visit with parishioners at Undley Common. The flying programme needed to be correct and 2 op groups were briefed to fly low on departure. Every flight was correct with no complaints. It could be that pilots have been turning too early. He added that he had no idea why an oddity had been seen over Woodlands and Briscoe Way but it was under investigation.

Cllr Norman reported planes directly over Lakenheath Hall and Woodlands.

Sqdn Ldr Neild said there would be night flying but the aim is to finish by 8:30pm. Flying had been pretty quiet recently with the average daily flight numbers reduced from 54 to the mid-thirties. Flying would be back to the average next Wednesday and Thursday. There were problems on the B1112 last week and although he contacted Anglian Water, work was not finished until Friday. It was a small example of what is to come with increased traffic. The current levels could not cope with just a small problem. With USAF Mildenhall remaining open until 2024, there will be further build ups at Lakenheath as it will not tie in with the drawdown at Mildenhall. The result will be the challenge of even more traffic.

The chairman thanked Sqdn Ldr Neild and he left the meeting.

3. Police Matters

The clerk reminded councillors of the Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner, Tim Passmore's meeting in Brandon tomorrow.

Cllr Gyte said that she had attended last year with approx. 8 others. She reminded councillors of the message that communities or individuals must inform police of concerns, so that they can prioritise.

4. Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting held on 2nd October 2017

After amendment it was proposed to accept minutes. All agreed.

5. Representations from Members of the Public

Mr Rowntree represented the Lakenheath AED Group and asked for funding help. Lakenheath AED Group was formed with the help of Wendy Barnes and a project run by the Beavers. A local supplier will provide a defibrillator and cabinet for £1800 with the first to be placed at the Brendan Fulham Centre. The second with approval of the governors is planned for the school and a further two for the Pavilion and Station Road, possibly in the telephone box at Mutford Green. A fifth unit is planned for Sedge Fen. With the help of several residents, councillors, businesses and the Christian Enterprise Foundation, £7520 has been raised towards the target of £9000 needed. Once installation is complete, the Beavers will continue to support with a maintenance project.

The chairman asked to vary the agenda and all agreed.

15. Defibrillators

Cllr Norman said that telephone boxes can be replaced with reconditioned ones and the Parish Council should do this as a gift to the village and to support the fund raising.

Cllr Lucas asked if a box could be swapped if it had been adopted by the Parish Council.

Cllr Brown asked about the electricity supply.

Mr Rowntree said that a reconditioned box costs upward of £3,000 and could be to whatever standard. Older boxes have lead paint and could only be refurbished professionally. BT normally supply the electricity for 3 to 4 years after adoption. An AED needs electricity for the heater inside.

Cllr Brown asked if grants were available for reconditioning telephone boxes to defibrillator standard.

Cllr Gentle said that the phone box at Mutford Green was installed later than the 1960's and may not have lead paint.

Cllr Gyte said that it was important to support and house a defibrillator at Mutford Green.

Cllr Lucas said that the refurbishment costs could form part of the Parish Council's donation.

Action Point – Investigate refurbishment costs of Mutford Green telephone box for a defibrillator.

6. Reports & Questions:-

(b) FHDC

Cllr Norman asked if it is permitted to have an army tank in your front garden as at 4 Arrowhead Drive.

Action Point – Investigate if it is permitted to have an army tank stored in a front garden

(c) Suffolk County Council

The clerk reported that the Community Warden has logged the need for replacement No Cycling Signs on the footpaths between High Street and Mayfields. No immediate action will be taken but this matter is listed for review and will be ranked and prioritised against all other signage requests when budgets allow.

Cllr Lucas reported that the 30mph signs entering the village at Station Road had turned around.

Cllr Brown asked for an update on the fixing of the public footpath sign on Maids Cross Hill.

Cllr Norman reported that the road surface on the junction of Wangford Road is awful and needs to be resurfaced.

Cllr Brown said that one side was done but not the other.

Action Point – Report 30mph road sign and road surface on Station Road.

Action Point – Chase fixing of public footpath sign on Maids Cross Hill.

7. Matters Arising from Minutes not elsewhere on the Agenda

The clerk reported that Bennett Homes had investigated the situation regarding a Mildenhire van parked alongside Station Road. No such van was seen and they assume it was only parked there temporarily.

Cllr Brown asked the clerk to chase the electronic presentation given for the proposed development at Lords Walk.

Action Point- Chase electronic presentation for development at Lords Walk.

8. Planning Matters:-

(a) To receive report from Planning Committee

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

(c) To appoint new members to the Planning Committee

Cllr Brown gave her report:

Applications supported:

1. DC/17/1731/FUL – (i) Siting of 1 no. portacabin to be used as Rural Craft and education activity area
(ii) 1 no. Livestock Barn – Cupola Farm, Undley.
2. DC/17/2058/TCA – Trees I conservation area – 3 no Horse chestnut to fell – The former Lakenheath Home, Back Street
3. DC/17/2000/HH – Householder application – front porch – 61 Broom Road
4. DC/17/1985/LB – Application for listed building consent – 3 no. replacement dormer windows – The Firs, 102A High Street

Applications with questions:

1. DC/17/1770/FUL – Planning application of 1 no roof light to rear elevation 44 High Street, Lakenheath. Clarification has been requested as the velux proposed appears to be sited over the bathroom at the rear yet the design and access statement suggests that the owner is trying to get natural light to the third room created at the front.

In Circulation:

1. DC/17/2170/ADV - Application for Advertisement Consent - Retention of 1no non-illuminated Fascia sign – 44 High Street. This is a retrospective case following involvement with FHDC enforcement team.

Major developments: The Parish Council were invited to a meeting with the Principal Planning officer, legal services and Head of the Planning Department, all from FHDC. The aim was to clarify points on the major development sites. We suggested that the school should be involved i.e. the Headteacher and the Chair or Vice Chair of Governors, having agreed with them that the school can be used for this meeting but we still await dates from the District Council.

In the meantime, the planning subcommittee with our Chairman and including David Gathercole have had a telephone conference discussion with our Solicitors and a Barrister in relation to whether we have reasonable grounds for continued legal action. David was involved due to his historic knowledge of the case going back before my time. In short, we do have reasonable grounds for JR but in the first instance a letter will be sent to FHDC. Dependent on the response we can then pursue JR in line with a previous resolution. Now assuming we go down the JR route you requested a budget to cover the cost. Based on worst case scenario, excluding VAT as the Parish can reclaim that, it is likely to be in the region of £44,000. If we lodge a JR claim it will be on the basis of a Protective Costs Order (PCO) to reduce the Parish Council's exposure to adverse costs should we lose. This would limit the opponents' costs to a maximum of £10,000. As you can appreciate a cost limit is a good thing as this gives the PC certainty in its adverse costs risk going forward. However, the consequence is that we agree to have the amount the PC can recover should we win from the Defendant Council capped - known as a "reciprocal cap". The standard reciprocal cap is £35,000 therefore the shortfall will be in the region of £8,000.

Cllr Gyte asked if the mandate given in 2014 by 190 residents covered the £44,000 mentioned. She accepted that the legal expenses had been kept within the annual budget but asked if the mandate included this larger amount. She added that she wasn't against a Judicial Review and fully supported the opposition to the speed of the major developments. However, she was uncomfortable using the 2014 mandate to spend a further £44,000 and would like to ask the village again and have a full council debate the issue. She asked if the mandate was all encompassing.

The chairman said the Parish Council had gone to the village with a very clear mandate. Every parishioner had the opportunity to answer and the majority who answered agreed. He added that little parishes are being let down and that Lakenheath had the means to pursue this.

Cllr Brown said that a great deal of work had been done and the village had shown their support and given the mandate.

Cllr Gyte said that she wasn't happy to proceed unless the village said yes. She added that 190 people 3 years ago gave a mandate to spend the annual budget but parishioners hadn't been told of the cost of £44,000 for a Judicial Review as it wasn't known at the time and she wasn't comfortable to proceed.

Cllr Brown said that 190 votes had been received in support with only 7 against with 3 of those living in Sedge Fen. She added that the Responsible Finance Officer would produce a budget, utilising the excess reserves and there shouldn't be the need to increase the precept request.

Cllr Newman said that FHDC shouldn't be allowed to walk all over the village.

Cllr Gyte said that she wasn't against Judicial Review and was on the Planning Sub-Committee, however she was concerned about going ahead on 190 votes, 3 years ago. The Parish Council are accountable to parishioners.

Cllr Gentle said council's should represent their ward not political parties.

Cllr Frost said that not many had taken part in the last vote and the Parish Council should cover themselves. If no increase in responses is received then the Parish Council can go ahead.

Cllr Gyte asked if the mandate included Judicial Review.

Cllr Brown said that the mandate covered legal action and was approved by the Parish Council. She advised that once approval notices are issued there is a very fine timeline. The approval notices are subject to S106 agreements and are imminent, with only 6 weeks after to lodge Judicial Review intentions.

If the Parish Council go to the electorate again there are time constraints with the Lakenheath Times, which is printed at the end of month and delivered possibly in the first week of December. This alone is 5 weeks away without giving time for responses.

Cllr Frost said that this is a major milestone for the Parish Council.

The chairman said that the Parish Council is here to represent the village, parishioners have put their trust in councillors voting for them and given the mandate. They would be angry if no action was taken as they rely on the Parish Council, who have a duty to serve.

Cllr Newman said that most people he spoke to support legal action.

Cllr Frost asked to register his unease.

Cllr Gentle said that there was no other choice, FHDC do not care about the village, creating commuter homes with no infrastructure or jobs. In comparison, the Parish Council spends in excess of £30,000 per annum on the dead.

Cllr Gyte agreed that this was true on infrastructure, jobs and health. However it may be different people who vote now to 3 years ago and it would be beneficial to ask again although she does take on board the time constraints.

Cllr Gentle said that there was an election very soon when parishioners could decide.

Cllr Gyte reiterated that she was not disloyal, she supported a Judicial Review and supports the planning sub-committee.

Cllr Brown said that with no infrastructure, car numbers would increase, causing congestion in Lakenheath which will become a dormitory town.

The chairman proposed to proceed to Judicial Review. It was seconded 6 in favour and 2 abstain.

Cllr Brown went on with her report:

SIR: I attended and gave representations in 4 of the 6 matters to be considered in the Inspectors examinations. The results are not likely to be available now until the spring, at the earliest. The reason for this is the conflict of information from the District Council in relation to the definition of the hierarchy which is not expected to be received by the Inspector until 13th November. This will then be circulated to all who made representations and it is likely that there will be a further 6-week consultation period to make any relevant comments on that response. This could then lead to a further hearing by the Inspector before final recommendations are made. In the meantime, there is still no local plan therefore speculative development could still come forward.

Tesco Site: I have received a letter from the owner who would like to have an informal meeting with the planning sub-committee to discuss proposals and Parish Council wishes prior to making a fresh planning application. This is refreshing and I would suggest that we hold this in the Parish Office. Timing will be arranged between us and hopefully I can report on proposals next month.

Lastly, now that we have a full complement of Councillors is there anyone now who would like to join us on the planning sub-committee as a fifth person? In addition, I have spoken with David Gathercole. He has a great deal of historic knowledge on the developing village and is passionate that we do not grow without suitable infrastructure in place. I would like to propose that he too be asked to join our subcommittee as a non-voting member.

Seconded by Cllr Lucas and all agreed.

Cllr Norman volunteered to join the planning sub-committee.

Seconded by Cllr Gentle and all agreed.

Cllr Norman reported that Lakenheath Hall are still working on 2 of the houses and keeping the site well maintained.

Cllr Brown reported that the owners of Lakenheath Hall had approached FHDC to purchase land to build affordable houses.

The clerk reported that Cllr Noble had responded to the Parish Council's concerns regarding planning applications decided at Delegation Panel. He is also open to receiving the Parish Council's concerns on a case by case basis and will always take these into account when deciding whether to object or not.

Cllr Brown asked for thanks to be given to Cllr Noble.

Action Point – Thanks to be given to Cllr Noble regarding Delegation Panels

Resolution – To proceed to Judicial Review

Resolution – Addition of David Gathercole and Cllr Roy Norman to planning sub-committee

9. Lakenheath Cemetery

(a) To receive a Cemetery Report

Cllr Lucas reported that the cemetery was looking very tidy for the time of year. She added that shoots are coming from the removed trees near to the green bench on the main driveway and also asked if the bird bath that was located in the now removed row of apple trees in the garden of rest could be relocated nearer to the gates.

Action Point – Contact CGM re shoots from removed lime trees and move bird bath nearer to gate

(b) Chapel

The clerk reported that when the chapel had been decorated, Mr Palmer noted that the bottom of one of the exterior doors had started to rot. He had provided a quotation to trim and fill to prevent it worsening. The quotation including labour and materials is £68.

Cllr Lucas said that it would be better to replace the rotten wood.

Cllr Gentle suggested leaving it until spring.

The clerk asked councillors if anyone knew of a carpenter who would take on this type of work.

10. Financial Matters including:-

(a) Payments of Accounts

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

Chq No.	Payee	Description of Supply	Amount
D/D + 3807 to 3810	Staff	October Salaries, Income Tax, NI & Pension	£4024.46
3811	Bussens & Parkin (2015) Ltd	Grass Feed	£34.55
3812	County Graphics (Norfolk) Ltd	Lakenheath Times - September & October 2017 Editions	£900.00
3813	Sunrise Services (East Anglia) Ltd	Cleaning Public Toilets - August & September 2017	£408.00
3814	BT Payment Services	Parish Office Telephone & Broadband	£64.56
3815	Sutton Services Ltd	Cemetery Bunker Clearance	£720.00
3816	Lakenheath PCC	S137 Grant	£200.00

3817	Community Action Suffolk	One Suffolk Web Hosting	£60.00
3818	Lakenheath Peace Memorial Hall	Parish Office Rent - July to Sept 2017	£523.81

(b) Bank Reconciliation

A bank reconciliation for 30th September 2017 was presented. It was proposed to accept and all agreed.

(c) Internal Audit Review

All councillors were provided with a review of the Internal Audit. It was proposed that the review was sufficient and that no further action was required. All agreed.

Resolution – Internal Audit Review requires no further action at this time

(d) Risk Assessment Review

All councillors were provided with a review of the Risk Assessment and Financial Management. It was proposed that the review was sufficient and that no further action was required. All agreed.

Resolution – Risk Assessment Review requires no further action at this time

11. Councillor Code of Conduct – Use of Social Media

Cllr Durrant had asked for this item to be included but as absent it was agreed to table until January.

12. Councillor Training

The clerk has obtained a quotation of between £360 and £620, dependant on length and content, to provide a condensed one day training course for all councillors. However, she had also received notification that Red Lodge Parish Council were doing something similar but over four evenings. Councillors had been invited to join for a small contribution.

Cllr Brown said that she would prefer to encompass everything in one day.

Cllr Lucas proposed that SALC came to the village to provide the training to all councillors in one day.

Seconded by Cllr Brown and all agreed.

Resolution – To organise a one day training day for councillors sometime during the first week of February

13. Dog Attack

The chairman said that it was only fair to discuss the recent dog attack and to respond to the parishioner.

Cllr Brown reminded councillors that a parishioner had attended a meeting and gave detail of how a motorcycle had ran over and killed her dog.

Cllr Gyte asked if the Parish Council had powers to do anything.

Cllr Gentle said that young people on bikes had been a problem for many years with accidents in the woodland. Complaints had been received that the woodland should be blocked but it could never be policed.

Cllr Norman said that owners allowed dogs to run free on the warren but couldn't believe that no one had come forward.

Cllr Gentle said that the area cannot be policed and that he felt more in danger from the dogs.

Cllr Gyte proposed writing to the parishioner, thanking her for attending the meeting, explaining that the Parish Council were deeply sorry and offering help and support in anyway.

It was seconded and all agreed.

Action Point – Contact parishioner offering help and support after dog attack.

14. Tony Pringle – Lest We Forget

The clerk had investigated obtaining a copy of Tony Pringle's Lest we Forget only to be advised that it was out of print. The cost to reprint would be £300.

Cllr Brown suggested asking, if reprinted, for a copy.

Cllr Gyte suggested putting an article in the LT asking if anyone wanted to buy a copy to help towards the cost of reprint.

Cllr Brown asked if the Suffolk Records Office had a copy.

Action Point – Investigate if the Suffolk Records Office have a copy of Lest we Forget by Tony Pringle

16. S137 applications to include Monday Club

The clerk read a request from Monday Club asking for funds towards costs of running the club.

After proposals of £100 and £200, Cllr Gyte proposed a grant of £250.

It was seconded by Cllr Newman and all agreed.

Resolution – S137 grant of £250 to Lakenheath Monday Club

17. Lakenheath Playingfields to include Public Toilets and CCTV

The clerk advised that the four PSPO signs for the play area have now been installed and the Playground Inspector will continue to monitor them during his monthly inspections.

The clerk advised councillors that vandal resistant, stainless steel sanitary ware is available. Recent ASB had included blocking the sinks and smashing glass from the bottle banks located in the car park.

Cllr Lucas asked if the bottle bank could be replaced with a different type of bin where the glass could not be accessed or if it could be locked. Was it also possible to replace the traps in the toilet sinks.

Cllr Norman said that the bins on Briscoe Way were a suitable alternative.

The clerk had provided quotations for CCTV to cover the children's play area toilets.

Cllr Gyte proposed installing the camera and putting up the appropriate signs.

It was seconded by Cllr Newman and all agreed.

Action Point - To request either lockable recycle bins or a type where the glass cannot be accessed

Action Point – Investigate having traps replaced on sinks

Resolution – Purchase CCTV for children's play area toilet and put up appropriate signs

18. Village Green

The clerk had received a quotation from Mr Smith for posts on the village green. He recommended 3 additional posts for the car park area and 1 for the footpath. The total cost for 4 oak posts to match the existing is £120 +VAT.

It was proposed to purchase the additional posts at a total cost of £120 +VAT. It was seconded and all agreed.

Resolution – Purchase 4 additional oak posts for the village green at a total cost of £120 +VAT

19. Remembrance Day Parade

The clerk advised Councillors of details of the Remembrance Day Parade published in the Lakenheath Times. Inspector Shipton had responded that he is unable to attend as he had already agreed to attend the Newmarket service. He will pass on the information to the local SNT Sergeant and if staffing levels permit, then he may be able to attend in his place. The chairman will lay the wreath on behalf of the Parish Council.

20. Consultations:

(a) Councillor Disqualification

Each councillor had been provided with a copy of the consultation. All questions were discussed and responses proposed. All agreed.

Resolution - Response to be given to Councillor Disqualification consultation

(b) Right Homes

Each councillor had been provided with a copy of the consultation.

Cllr Lucas said that the consultation related to District Councils and had nothing to do with Parish Councils.

Cllr Gentle said that it was just a paper exercise.

Cllr Brown proposed supporting the SALC response with a comment added to Q1b to include parish and local communities.

It was seconded and all agreed.

Resolution – Response to be given to Right Homes consultation

21. Lakenheath Heritage Group

Cllr Brown gave her report:

The very good news is that the sculpture has been restored as shown in the photo provided with your agenda. The finish is sympathetic and respectful to the original design. Various bolts, resin and fixings have been used in the hope that it will not be seriously damaged by vandals and last much longer than the original. The one rather unfortunate element to the project is that Forest Heath did not manage to convey to the contractor the correct sequence for the metal plates. The result was that the contractor assumed there wasn't a sequence and fitted same ahead of schedule. It is not feasible now to change the sequence. The panels were quite difficult to read and not being able to read them in a circular direction is not a huge loss for those that want to make the effort to do so. By some fortune the reading sequence is now North, South, East, West (depending on how you orientate yourself) which requires you to walk in a 'cross' sequence to get the full story and therefore has some resonance to the installation in that regard.

The result is that FHDC will be requesting funding next year to replace the interpretive panel and at that stage can alter the text to advise on the sequence that they can be read in. So as not to repeat the error a number will be placed on each panel with a small inlay.

In view of the time, the chairman asked to suspend standing order 3(w). All agreed.

22. Phone Box Sponsorship

The clerk had obtained prices for the replacement of parts and paint for the refurbishment of the telephone boxes. However with the possibility of lead paint it was decided to look into professional refurbishment.

Action Point – Clerk to investigate professional refurbishment of telephone boxes with the possibility of using for defibrillator

23. Items for Future Meetings

- Peace Memorial Hall Funding
- Defibrillators
- Telephone Boxes
- Code of Conduct - Use of Social Media (January)
- Village Keeper (January)

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

A reminder that the SALC AGM was on November 7th at Blackbourne Community Centre, Elmswell.

Cllr Norman said that Mr Palmer's letter in the Lakenheath Times was an attack on the Parish Council generally and on Cllr Brown personally.

25. To note date of next Meeting - Monday 4th December 2017

Members of the public were asked to leave the meeting.

9. Lakenheath Cemetery

(c) Cemetery / Village Keeper*

The clerk reported that an annual budget (not actual expenditure) of £33,000 was allowed to include the village keeper's salary, cemetery cottage repairs, mower insurance, machinery capital and expenses. FHDC had provided a quotation of £25,679 pa to take on the contracting work when the village keeper retires in May. This included grass mowing, hedge cutting, pruning, bedding plants, weeding, edging and strimming of all areas within the Parish Council's responsibility. She also provided councillors with a list of tasks carried out by the village keeper that could not be contracted.

After discussion it was decided that the only way for all tasks to be completed, in a cost effective way, was to keep a full time village keeper. The process of employing and replacing the existing keeper to be discussed again in January.

Action Point – Replacement Village Keeper to be discussed in January 2018

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:15pm.

