

LAKENHEATH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Lakenheath Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 4th November 2019
at the Methodist Church commencing at 7:00pm

Present

Councillors E Morley (Chairman), J Hastings, G Kelly, S Palmer, J Gentle, R Norman, P Gyte, A Gyte, I Frost, D Gathercole, Clare Shimmon (Clerk), Sqdn Ldr Turnbull and 13 members of the public.

1 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Newman and Cllrs Noble and S Frost.

2 Declaration of Interest

Cllr A Gyte - Lakenheath Football Club Trustee and Assistant Manager
Cllr P Gyte - Lakenheath Good Neighbours and Lakenheath Community SpeedWatch
Cllr Hastings - Lakenheath Keep Fit & Curling Clubs
Cllr Frost - Friends of Lakenheath Library Trustee
Cllr Gathercole - West Suffolk Council Planning & Lakenheath Playingfield Association
Cllr Norman - Village Hall & Goward & Evans Charity
Cllr Palmer - Ownership of land at Briscoe Way

3 Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting held on 7th October 2019

It was proposed and seconded the Minutes of the Council meeting on 7th October were signed as an accurate record of the meeting. All present at the October meeting agreed.

4 Representations from Members of the Public

A resident commented that the Parish Council should be able to carry out the Cemetery Cottage inspection, saving a professional fee.

A resident thanked the Parish Council for publishing draft minutes.

5 Police Matters including PCSO/Special Constable/Private Security

Cllr Kelly gave a report on the Parish Council's findings regarding the options for policing in the village.

Issues that affect the village will only get worse if not addressed. He put forward four options:

1. Do nothing.
2. Attract local individuals to the role of Special Constable, who would have the same powers as a PCSO but only volunteer 16 hours per month.
3. Employ a private security firm who are a reasonable deterrent but can take little or no action.
4. Employ a PCSO who have 20 powers including issuing parking tickets, tackling dog fouling and addressing vandalism, with the Chief Constable able to authorise other things. Although the cost to the village would be £37,300 the starting salary is £16,000 for a designate PCSO. The officer can be called away at any time and Cllr Kelly's experience has been that the officer at Ipswich Hospital was infrequently on site.

Employing a PCSO would mean that the village is paying more than twice for policing and a full time officer may not be justified long term.

Neighbouring parishes had been approached to share an officer but no firm commitment had been received.

The clerk reported that Beck Row may be interested in sharing for 1 day per week.

Cllr Kelly agreed that this would help to keep the cost down and help to keep the officer better employed. The deadline to recruit for April 2020 is the 15th of November.

Comments from Members:

Cllr Hastings - doing something is good but would it have any affect.

Cllr Palmer - waste of money and more time was needed to consider.

Cllr Kelly - things will not improve unless something is done.

Cllr Norman - was the rise for policing within the Council tax just subsidising the big towns?

Cllr Gentle - happy to go with the majority but don't want an officer wandering aimlessly, would they be victims of aggression from illegal parkers?

Cllr Gathercole - A PCSO had been considered before but did not proceed as policing would then be paid for twice. Would an officer be a glorified traffic warden? The ideal solution would be a police constable.

Cllr Frost - Payment is already made for a policing with no service received in the village. It is the same across the whole of Suffolk and would rather do something.

Cllr P Gyte - Although the PC had tried to engage with Suffolk Constabulary, policing does not improve in the village. This is a huge concern to parishioners and it up to the PC to address. Although paying twice it is not going to get any better unless action is taken. It is not the answer just to put up with it.

Cllr A Gyte - Although extra payment was taken by Suffolk Constabulary in the council tax nothing will change in the village.

Cllr Kelly confirmed that parking fines will not be paid to the village. 40 hours per week are agreed at the outset and ideally will include hours outside 9 to 5, although overtime is payable at certain times. A refund payment should be agreed if the officer is called away.

The clerk read comments received by written response to the poll. Voting 20 in favour of a full time PCSO, 5 in favour of a part time PCSO and 5 against.

Comments from residents at the meeting:

Times should be flexible to maximise resources, the High Street should be considered a priority.

The poll taken in the Lakenheath Times had been more positive than other polls and less money is being spent. A PCSO will make the High Street safer with existing council tax payment giving only a basic level of policing. Patrol cars had been active over the weekend, stopping cars on Station Road. If extra policing is required, it has to be paid for. Vehicles using the High Street don't always stop at the crossing as they are distracted by other things going on around. What chance does a pedestrian have? What happens if someone is knocked over? The PC should take ownership.

An officer's hours should be varied, making sure offenders are not warned. A pooled arrangement with other parishes could see a 24 hour system. An officer will be kept busy.

It is amazing that no-one has been killed with parking issues also seen around the school. Problems need addressing. Although a PCSO is a good idea, disappointed that the PC have been give so little time to decide. Action should be taken with expectations explained, the village can't stand around and it is only a question of time before someone is killed.

What will it cost the council tax payer, £15 pa across 2500 homes? Working alone, PCSOs are vulnerable to abuse and violence. Why should the PC fund with Suffolk Constabulary increasing the council tax, for what? Burglaries are just given a crime number A guarantee should be obtained to ensure lost hours are repaid.

A vehicle was parked on the crossing for 2 days and was only moved when the police were advised using 101. Police cars have also been seen parked on the crossing and taking no action with others.

Would a traffic warden be a cheaper option?

Cllr Kelly responded that responsibility for illegal parking is due to be moved to West Suffolk Council in 2020, although this had been promised for a number of years.

Cllr P Gyte had knowledge of PCSOs, with the power to prosecute, attending Community Speedwatch Sessions in other parts of the county. Without an officer present, the data is just passed to Suffolk Constabulary.

The chairman said that the response from the poll and public participation showed that action is wanted.

The clerk had provided a provisional budget for 2020/21 which showed that by using a small amount of general reserve, a PCSO was affordable without increasing the PCs element of the council tax bill.

It was proposed and seconded to employ a PCSO. Voting 6 in favour and 3 abstain.

6 Reports & Questions:-

(a) RAF Commander Lakenheath

Sqdn Ldr Turnbull apologised for not attending last month's meeting. He reported that the recent 5am flights had been to the Middle East with 30 jets away from the base at the moment. Buildings have started to go up for the F35s. He offered to support the upcoming VE Day celebrations as it is likely to be the last celebrations with veterans attending.

(b) West Suffolk District Council

After receiving a number of complaints, the clerk had reported the bins permanently left on the pavement outside Goward House. Dead vermin had also been seen.

(c) Suffolk County Council

There were none.

7 Financial Matters including:

(a) Payments of Accounts

It was proposed and seconded to authorise cheques and the release of online payments for payments previously agreed. All agreed.

Payee	Description of supply	Amount
Staff	October Salaries, Income Tax, NI & Pension	£4231.71
The RBL Poppy Appeal	Poppy Wreath	£25.00
Glasdon UK Ltd	Grit Bin and Ice Melt	£238.61
BT Payment Services	Parish Office Telephone & Broadband	£35.70
EDF Energy	Electricity - Cemetery Chapel	£92.26
Simpson's Nurseries Ltd	Crataegus Monogyna Whips x 16	£15.94
Clare Shimmon (reimbursement)	Community Action Suffolk - Website Subscription	£60.00
Sunrise Services (East Anglia) Ltd	Cleaning Public Toilets (September)	£270.00
A L & P Gyte (reimbursement)	Edging for Permanent Memorial on Playingfields	£37.90

(b) Bank Reconciliation

The clerk reported that a £100 payment agreed at the July meeting to Sharing Parenting had not been included in the payments or bank reconciliation, creating a small error for July and August. It has been rectified in the bank reconciliation for 30th September.

A bank reconciliation for 30th September 2019 was presented. It was proposed and seconded to accept. All agreed.

(c) Risk Assessment Review

Members 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.

(d) Internal Audit Review

Members 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.

(e) Out-turn Report

Members were provided with an out-turn report and provisional budget.

8 Lakenheath Cemetery

(a) To receive a Cemetery Report

Cllr Hastings gave her report, including trees now meeting over the central drive and the problem with leaves at this time of year. A grave in the new section has a large 3ft photograph and a number of tributes including beer cans, bottles and a mobile phone. It may be a birthday or anniversary and no action was being suggested at the moment.

The chairman confirmed that this is a transient issue.

The Clerk reported that the cleaning contractor had confirmed that all necessary soap and dispensers would be fitted shortly.

(b) To Confirm Grant of Exclusive Rights of Burial

There was one.

(c) Vehicle and Insurance

Three quotes were presented for a new John Deere Gator Utility Vehicle XUV865M along with a quote from Tomlinson Groundcare Ltd for the demo provided to the village keeper earlier in the year.

It was proposed and seconded to purchase the demo, with a £7,000 deposit and finance over three years with a monthly repayment of £315.62. All agreed.

(d) Cottage Ventilation & Shed Window

It had been confirmed by a local builder that there is no alternative other than an opening to allow ventilation into the entrance hall, where the boiler is housed for the cemetery cottage.

A quote of £1000 had been received from Style Windows to replace the back door with a stable type door with an opening along with £165 to replace the rotten shed window. It was proposed and seconded to accept. All agreed.

(e) Cottage Inspection

The House and Property Company located in High Street had quoted £45 to carry out an inspection of the Cemetery Cottage. It was proposed and seconded to accept. All agreed.

9 Heritage Trail / Celtic Cross

Mr Jones, Chair of Lakenheath Heritage Group gave an update on the Heritage Trail and Celtic Cross. The village trail project is complete, booklets were presented to Members and will be available in the Parish Office, Library, St Marys Church and Peace Memorial Hall at the end of the month.

The next stage it to extend the history onto interpretative boards. He asked the parish council to help with permissions required and contacting any households affected.

The Celtic Cross is included in the trail but is now completely overgrown along with the footpath sign laying on the ground. He asked if the PC would be able to support with a new sign showing the Heritage Trail.

Parishioners are asked to support, helping to improve the village.

He asked for permission to erect a sign for the trail on the back on the noticeboard in the Wings Road car park. All Members agreed.

10 Remembrance Day Parade

Confirmation had been received from Suffolk Constabulary and RAF Lakenheath that an Officer would attend along with a Base Commander. A request had also been submitted for the Honor Guard to participate.

Cllr Gathercole has helped to secure band members from the school on RAF Lakenheath. Mr Kennedy would continue to lead the parade and Mr Edwards would carry out duties at the war memorial.

Road closures would take place and the parade would commence at 2:30pm from Hall Drive.

11 WWI & VE Day Commemorations

Cllr P Gyte gave an update on VE Day Commemoration plans. Work would soon start on the permanent memorial on the playingfields. The committee had met and started to engage about events to take place on the playingfields over the weekend of early May bank holiday next year.

12 Items for Future Meetings

There were none.

13 Consultations:-

(a) West Suffolk Council - Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) 2019 Stakeholder consultation

Cllr Kelly proposed a small group is put together to put forward representations to this consultation. It was seconded for Cllrs Kelly, Norman, A Gyte and P Gyte to form the group. Voting 9 agree and 1 against.

(b) Suffolk Minerals & Waste Local Plan Modifications Consultation

It was proposed and seconded to make no comment. All agreed.

(c) Electoral review of Suffolk

It was proposed and seconded to make no comment. All agreed.

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

There was none.

Cllr Gathercole left the meeting.

15 Planning Matters:-

(a) To consider all outstanding Planning Applications and if necessary, any applications received after preparation of the agenda:

- **DC/19/1950/HH - Householder Planning Application - Two storey rear extension - Four Bays, 6 Back Street**

It was proposed and seconded to support. All agreed.

- **DC/19/1240/FUL - Planning Application - 1no. dwelling with garage - Land Rear of 12 Mill Road**
It was proposed and seconded to object with the chapel wall still causing visibility concerns, making it dangerous for pedestrians as vehicles cross the footpath. Voting 7 in favour and 1 abstain.
- **Land between Dumpling Bridge Lane & Highbridge Gravel Drove**
It was proposed and seconded to bring to the attention of Planning Enforcement, evidence of possible travellers on the land between Dumpling Bridge Land & Highbridge Gravel Drove.
- **DC/19/2129/HH - Householder Planning Application - Single storey side extension - 19 Highfields**
It was proposed and seconded to support. All agreed.
- **DC/14/2096/HYB - Hybrid planning application - 1) Full application for the creation of a new vehicular access onto Station Road, and entrance to a new primary school, 2) Outline application for up to 375 dwellings (including 112 affordable homes), and the provision of land for a new primary school, land for ecological mitigation and open space and associated infrastructure (as amended).**
It was proposed and seconded, with the support of Mrs Brown, for representations to be put together in conjunction with SHELAA. Voting 6 in favour, 1 abstain and 1 against.

16 To note date of next Meeting – Monday 2nd December 2019

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:46pm