

MINUTES OF MEETING OF LAKENHEATH PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE METHODIST CHURCH CHAPEL
ON MONDAY 6th APRIL 2009

Present :- Messrs D Gathercole (Chairman)

I Frost

J Gentle

D Lucas

E Morley

R Rolph

I Smith

M Whitehand

Mrs A Chambers

Mrs P Rissen

In Attendance :- Richard Watson, Planning – FHDC, Matt Hales SCC Locality Officer; Suffolk County Councillor Colin Noble; FHDC Councillor Simon Flack & Sqdn Ldr Jerry Neild
9 members of the public were present and 1 member of the press.

The Chairman, in order to facilitate visitors to the Meeting, varied the order of business without objection from the Parish Council.

6.REPORT FROM

a)RAF COMMANDER

Sqdn Ldr Neild advised the meeting that he did not have anything to report. He said that there had recently been a presentation from RAF Lakenheath in Brandon, similar to that held in Lakenheath on 26th February 2009 and it too seemed to get a favourable reception from attendees. Accordingly, Sqdn Ldr Neild would like to know if it is something that should be repeated in autumn. He did add that it is not always RAF Lakenheath F15s that cause disturbance over the village, sometimes it is visiting aircraft. However, this has been taken up by Operations Group Commander.

Action Point - Sqdn Ldr Neild to be advised on the worth of having a further presentation from RAF Lakenheath in the autumn.

Sqdn Ldr Neild was thanked for his attendance and he left the meeting.

10.RICHARD WATSON – FOREST HEATH DISTRICT COUNCIL – LAKENHEATH HALL

Following his attendance at the November 2008 Parish Council meeting to hear Parish Councillors/residents concerns about the situation at Lakenheath Hall, there was an internal meeting at FHDC on 12th November where it became clear that the current state at the Hall did not tie up with the plans. From this, it was decided to look at a number of issues, namely, the wall; footpath; felling of trees; asphaltting business; caravans/minibuses on site; marquee housing a business activity and ownership of Hall Drive. All of the issues have been addressed with the exception of the last one – ownership of Hall Drive- which is proving difficult. Attention was focussed on the felling of the trees and possible prosecution but a successful outcome could not be expected; so, in future, measures will be taken, it is hoped, to prevent a recurrence. Non – compliance (plans) was looked at but since there has been no building work since last summer and a new consortium – albeit with familiar faces – is hoping to put in new plans, this has not been pursued. The demolishing of part of the wall is an offence on its own but is compounded by the fact it is in a Conservation Area and there are two “offences” here – it had been thought that as only part of the wall has been demolished action by FHDC may not be successful but papers received by Mr Watson on Friday from a Barrister seem to suggest otherwise. However, 6 Enforcement Notices have been served to all parties with regards to marquee – should be removed by 1

June 2009; caravans – should be removed by 27 July 2009; minibuses- should be removed by 1 June 2009; fences – should be removed by 1 June 2009; portacabins- should be removed by 29 June 2009. However, appeals can be lodged and if they are timeous clock stops ticking and will only restart if appeal fails. The Parish Council will be informed if appeals are lodged and any appeal must be lodged by beginning of May. There is to be one further prosecution – failure to give information. Cllr Gentle, whilst expressing thanks for the action FHDC are taking, said that he could see no end to the bad situation at Lakenheath Hall. Cllr Smith expressed concern about costs of this action and Cllr Lucas felt that there should be some “fast track” in law to end the situation at the Hall as the current Parish Council had originally tried to get some action in August 2007.

The Chairman thanked Mr Watson for his efforts in this matter and for his attendance at the PC meeting.

11. PRESENTATION BY MATT HALES OF SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL – LOCALITY PILOT

Matt Hales introduced himself as the Locality Officer for the Brandon/Lakenheath area. This area coincides with the Lakenheath/Brandon SNT. The pilot has been set up as a result of changes in the law and in order to get a more “community based engagement”. The Local Government Review, regardless of outcome, will not affect this pilot. It is felt that a Neighbourhood Panel is the best way to get a good cross section of views. The Neighbourhood Panel will have elected/councillor representatives and community representatives. The Police, County/District/Town/Parish Councils, NHS and Local Strategic Partnership will also “feed” into it. It is hoped that this will identify priorities within the community and in so doing positive outcomes will be achieved. Cllr Smith asked how a balance will be achieved as some people are more vocal than others. Matt Hales said that the “Young Foundation”, a charity, is working in the area. Cllr Gentle asked about funding for the pilot. SCC are funding it - £100,000. Cllr Gathercole asked if the NHS are “on-board”. Matt Hales is trying to get them on board and on being told of current problems the Clerk is having with the Primary Care Trust has said that he will take up any problems the Clerk may have with his contact. Cllr Smith asked why it is thought that this pilot will work. He was told that Insp Derek Wilding (Police – SNT), SCC & FHDC are all “on-board” for a meeting on 22nd April. Matt Hales in closing said that he would like a representative from the PC and he is looking to set up the panel in June/July.

Action Points :- Clerk to contact Matt Hales re PCT issue.

Parish Council to consider “electing” representative for Neighbourhood Panel

Matt Hales was thanked for his contribution and he left the meeting

6. REPORT FROM

c) SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

Cllr Noble said that his Locality Budget for year 2008/09 is now spent and it will not be re-enacted until 26th June 2009 – he expects his allocation to be c£18,000.

On the bus system, both he & Cllr Smith have spent some time on this – agreed that the demand led service does not work well in this area. Real time signage is being rolled out – has already happened in Ipswich, Felixstowe & Lowestoft.

Cllr Smith raised the issue of the traffic bollards in the High Street – still not working properly – if they cannot work properly they should be removed.

Cllr Gathercole expressed dismay that the C600 does not seem to have been looked at by Highways, especially as the grass is now growing on the verges. He asked the Clerk to raise the issue of Primary Care Trust consultation – the Clerk had received papers relating to new health care proposals which are out for consultation. However, the date for meetings in this area would not have allowed for any advertising of same; thereby, little chance of much consultation! Cllr Noble said he was not sure that

SCC could assist with difficulties the Parish Council might have with the PCT and that SCC, themselves, have a “difficult relationship” with the PCT.

Referring to the request taken to FHDC for assistance in improving the “wooded island” on Station Road (owned by Bennetts), Cllr Gathercole said that FHDC had suggested he took his “request” to SCC. Cllr Noble said that SCC have less powers than District Council in these matters. Cllr Gathercole said that if Cllr Noble would put that in an e-mail to him he would take it back to FHDC.

Action Points – Cllr Noble to pursue Highways re traffic bollards & C600 and to e-mail Cllr Gathercole re difficulties SCC would have in assisting with Station Road issue.

Cllr Noble was thanked for his contribution and he left the meeting.

The Chairman opened the meeting.

1.APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

2.DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Gathercole – Planning & LDF (FHDC), Village Hall & Lakenheath Playing Fields.

3. POLICE MATTERS

Nothing to report – no police in attendance and no report had been received.

4.CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 2nd MARCH 2009

It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to accept the minutes.

The Chairman closed the meeting

5.REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Mr Samuels said that the Librarian, Pam Shipp, is due to retire shortly and as she has done such a good job at the Library above and beyond the duties of Librarian (e.g. she has greatly assisted the drama group by selling tickets for their performances) would the Parish Council be agreeable to sending a letter to her thanking her for her efforts within the community. The Chairman said that the PC would go a step further and put an article in Lakenheath Times.

Mr Samuels further asked if it would be possible to include a list of local tradesmen in Lakenheath Times (from his dealings with Good Neighbours he felt that such a list could be useful. Cllr Gathercole said that it seemed a noble idea and asked that the idea be left with the PC to consider.

Action Point – Clerk to submit an article to Lakenheath Times.

6b) FOREST HEATH DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cllr Flack had nothing to report. Cllr Gentle asked why money was being spent on the entrance to the FHDC when members of the public can no longer pay their Council Tax there. Cllr Flack said that nothing had been spent on the building for 20 years and that they were trying to improve things for customers.

He added that in view of LGR FHDC were not spending as much on the building has had originally been planned. Cllr Gathercole went on to say that water had been pouring in so something had to be done and additionally there had been complaints about lack of privacy in foyer (for customers).

He reported that Marshalls of Cambridge are not going to relocate to FHDC area.

He wished to know if the PC wished to support a proposal from Ryedale District Council that there should be a “universal postal service operating 6 days a week, which must, therefore, be wholly publicly owned”. It was proposed, seconded and agreed, with one abstention, that this proposal from Ryedale District Council should be supported.

The meeting was reopened

7.MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

Cllr Smith raised concerns about the telephone box by the Library. Cllr Morley added that the box in Eriswell Road has suffered damage – he had reported that but nothing seems to have been done. The Clerk was not aware of damage to the Eriswell Road box but said that the box next to the Library had been reported and BT had given her work reference number.

Cllr Gathercole, referring to Mr Pullen’s request for consideration to be given to the possible siting of exercise equipment for older residents in the recently cleared Mutford Green area, said the matter was currently being given consideration by Mr Evershed of FHDC.

Cllr Gathercole said that he had been able to secure a possible £3080 from advertising space in a “revamped” Lakenheath Times – monies to be paid quarterly, in advance. He asked the PC if this was the path they wanted to go down. It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all that this is how they wished to proceed. Cllr Gathercole said that he would arrange for a receipt book to be printed and that hopefully the revamped Lakenheath Times would be up and running in June. He said that he would take on the organising role for 6 months. Cllr Smith proposed a vote of thanks, agreed, for Cllr Gathercole’s efforts.

Action Points – Clerk to chase up phone box repairs

Cllr Gathercole to make arrangements for revamped Lakenheath Times

8.PLANNING MATTERS

a) TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Cllr Rolph said that 3 applications had been considered – 2 had been objected to.

There was no objection to:-

F/2008/0827/FUL –erection single storey side extension – 61 Covey Way

There were objections to:-

F/2008/0810/FUL(part retrospective)- erection single storey extension -111 High Street

F/2008/0811/CAC(part retrospective)- demolition rear outbuildings – 111 High Street

b) TO CONSIDER- ANY OUTSTANDING APPLICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE

There are 2 applications in circulation.

9. LAKENHEATH CEMETERY

a) TO RECEIVE REPORT FROM CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Cllr Rissen reported that it looked neat and tidy. She asked that Cemetery Committee members attend a meeting on Monday 27th April 2009 at 7.00pm to discuss one or two matters. Cllr Gathercole wished it to be known that he had met with someone who travels around Suffolk /Norfolk on business and he had remarked on how well kept the Cemetery in Lakenheath is – this is a credit to the Cemetery Keeper. Cllr Gathercole said that with the permission of the PC he wished to have a demonstration of an industrial strimmer with the Cemetery Keeper. Such a machine costs in the region of £400 but if it is suitable he will propose that the PC buy one.

b) TO CONFIRM GRANT OF EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS

There were two :-

David Allen of Lakenheath

Margaret Moore of Mildenhall

12. UNDLLEY ROAD LAND

i) TO RECEIVE OFFER

The Clerk opened an envelope from Brown & Co and read its contents – highest offer received is £67,400. “The offer is unconditional and we believe the prospective purchaser is in a position to proceed to an early exchange of contracts”

ii) TO CONSIDER ACCEPTANCE/REJECTION OF OFFER

There was a proposal to accept the offer, which was seconded. The Chairman asked if there were any other proposals. There was a second proposal – to retain the land – this was seconded.

Voting on the second proposal was 2 for and 7 against.

Voting on the original proposal i.e. to accept the offer was 7 for and 2 against.

Resolved – Clerk to make necessary arrangements to accept offer in sum of £67,400 for Undley Road land

13. CHILDREN’S PLAY AREA (TO INCLUDE RECEIVING OF QUOTES FOR NEW FENCING)

The Clerk said that prior to reading the quotes for the new fencing she wished to advise the Council that the inspections have been satisfactory and that repainting work which had been identified (to be done by the Village Keeper) is being carried out as weather allows.

The quotes for the new fencing were :-

Chase Timber Products Ltd £3,300 plus VAT

RST £5,300 plus VAT

Wicksteed £10,537 plus VAT

Cllrs Whitehand and Smith asked if the quotes were like for like – confirmed that they are.

It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to accept the quote in the sum of £3,300 plus VAT from Chase Fencing.

The Chairman asked the meeting if they would now agree to the purchase of 2 picnic tables for the Playing Fields (Association). The Parish Council having previously agreed to the purchase of 1 in financial year to 31 March 2009 and another 1 in the new financial year.

This was agreed by all.

Resolved – Clerk to arrange for Chase Fencing to supply and erect new fencing and order of 2 picnic tables for LPFA.

14. LAKENHEATH WARREN – NATURE RESERVE GATES

Following the concern of some Parish Councillors regarding the non- closure of the gates Cllr Gathercole said that he would ask FHDC to remove the gates and have the sign, regarding gate closure, removed. The Clerk said that the gates have not been closed since before Mr Archer retired from the post of Village Keeper. He had experienced great difficulty, when it was time to close the gates, locating the owners of the cars parked in that area; so, when FHDC put the barrier up the gates were no longer locked. The same problems would arise now if the gates were to be locked.

Action Point – Cllr Gathercole to make arrangements with FHDC for removal of gates/sign.

15. PREPARATION FOR EXTERNAL AUDIT- RISK ASSESSMENT & INTERNAL AUDIT REVIEW

In preparation for the External Audit, the Clerk said that a Risk Assessment (details of which had been previously circulated to Councillors) had been carried out by the Chairman, Cllr Gathercole, and herself. It covers areas highlighted by External Auditors , Stoy Hayward.

Secondly, last year’s Internal Audit, as the Clerk had previously told the Parish Council, had not highlighted any areas of concern.

16.FINANCIAL MATTERS

(a)PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

A schedule of payments for the month was tabled. It was proposed to accept expenditure as listed, seconded and agreed by all.

(b)BANK RECONCILIATION

A bank reconciliation for months of February and March 2009 were presented. It was proposed, seconded & agreed by all to accept the reconciliations.

c)DRAFT ACCOUNTS Y/E 31st MARCH 2009

The Clerk tabled draft accounts for year to 31 March 2009. Cllr Whitehand queried * against two items – the Clerk explained that there was no significance to them. As there is a “reserve” for street lighting issues – G39 and concrete columns – the Clerk asked the meeting to confirm whether or not she should reduce “reserves” by amount spent in the last year on these issues. The meeting agreed NOT to reduce reserves by amount spent in the year.

It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to accept the Income /Expenditure Account Y/E 31st March 2009 as tabled.

17.CORRESPONDENCE

1. SCC- as from 1st April 2009 restricted amounts of plasterboard can be taken at only 3 household waste sites – nearest to Lakenheath is Bury St Edmunds
 - 2.SCC – letter from new Intelligent Transport Systems and Street Lighting Team Leader – he is trying to do utmost to improve services Town & Parish Councils get from EDF – currently there are problems.
 - 3.SALC – proposal that non elected/coopted Cllrs will not be able to take on role of Chair/Vice Chair in future. Further proposal to allow appointed Councillors onto local councils.
 - 4.Suffolk Wildlife Trust magazine
 5. Rural Communities newsletter
- and letters of thanks from :- the Voluntary Network; Suffolk Accident Rescue Service; OPTUA and Age Concern for S137 donations (£70 each) made to them
- The Clerk reminded the Councillors that all correspondence in box file in office, where it can be looked at for 3 months, thereafter, it will be filed.

18. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Cllr Smith asked for Village Green & Public Transport

19. TO NOTE FUTURE DATES

- 27th April 7 – 8pm at Brandon Leisure Centre SCC /Mid Suffolk meeting on LGR
13th May 2009 9.30 – 4.30 at Elmswell – Suffolk Acre presentation on “Vitalising Rural Communities
16th June 2009 7 – 9pm at Beck Row – FHDC Parish and Town Forum
15th August 2009 – Beck Row Fun Day

20.TO NOTE DATE OF NEXT MEETING (Annual General Meeting) – Monday 11th May 2009

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.00pm