

MINUTES OF MEETING OF LAKENHEATH PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE METHODIST CHURCH CHAPEL
ON MONDAY 2nd November 2009

Present :- Messrs D Gathercole (Chairman)

J Gentle

D Lucas

E Morley

R Rolph

I Smith

M Whitehand

Mrs A Chambers

Mrs P Rissen

Ms K Sizer

In Attendance :- Sqdn Ldr Jerry Neild & Cllr Colin Noble

13 members of the public were present and 2 member of the press.

Before opening the meeting, the Chairman said that the Clerk wished to say something. The Clerk referred to item 11 page 550 (previous meeting) and said having already apologised to the Chairman and the Vice Chair she now wished to apologise to the meeting for an error on her part in not allowing the acting Chair to vote on the item in question. The Chairman, following on from the Clerk's apology, expressed his disappointment at the way the Parish Council had conducted themselves during the time he was out of the Chair.

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

6.REPORT FROM

a)RAF COMMANDER

Sqdn Ldr Neild said he did not really have much to report – he has been away from the office for 3 days. On driving issues raised previously they are being addressed – there is a driver training programme and there has been no case of anyone who has been through the programme having been involved in an accident. Cllr Lucas reiterated his concerns about accidents and the need to address those issues as quickly as possible. Cllr Gathercole said that he and Cllr Rissen had attended the presentation (RAF Lakenheath Operations) in the Village Hall on 19th October – he thought it was a good presentation and extended his thanks to those who took part. The Clerk said that she had received an e-mail from Sqdn Ldr Neild's PA advising that there would be out of hours flying on 1st and 8th November 2009. Sqdn Ldr Neild told the meeting that night flying operations have now commenced and will continue until March. Generally, these essential training missions will end by 10.00pm.

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

The meeting was opened.

1.APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Frost – unwell – apologies accepted.

The Clerk said that PCSO Thomas had indicated some days ago he would be unlikely to attend the meeting.

2.DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Cllr Whitehand – Youth Club Leader and husband of LPF Committee Member

Cllr Rissen – occasionally Minutes Secretary to LPFA

Cllr Gathercole, in answering a question from Cllr Gentle regarding a possible prejudicial interest (Cllr Whitehand – brother in law is LPF pavilion architect) said he had taken advice from FHDC on this matter.

3. POLICE MATTERS

No report had been received.

Cllr Smith said that he had attended the SNT meeting in Brandon – various agencies attend. He said that if there are relevant, non emergency, matters which someone may wish to bring to the attention of the SNT these could be channelled (it had been suggested) through the Clerk. The meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month. Concern was expressed about parking outside the fish and chip shop – dangerous and should be brought to police attention.

Action Point – Clerk to raise this last point with police.

4.CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 5th October 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

A resident of Hall Drive said that he had been made aware that Lakenheath Hall / Hall Drive has a new owner – John Cruickshank and he is director of Lakenheath Hall Estate UK Ltd – a name very similar to a previous company owned by previous owner of Lakenheath Hall / Hall Drive. He said that for the last 6 years residents of Hall Drive have had to put up with wanton destruction of the area. Recently, police were called to an incident where 2 children had airguns pointed at them! Now 2 more planning applications for Lakenheath Hall have been submitted to FHDC. Yet more trees are to be felled – although part of a Conservation Area little benefit is derived from this status. He hopes the Parish Council will throw out the applications.

The Clerk read out a letter from a resident of Mayfields who also objects to the aforementioned plans to FHDC – primarily on the grounds of access to Hall Drive – a very dangerous bend in her opinion.

A member of the public, whilst expressing her pleasure at the work being done on the Playing Fields is of the opinion that £15,000.00 is a sufficient sum of money to give the LPFA at this time. She has attended several LPFA fund raising events and has seen very few parents there.

Another member of the public said she would go one step further - £15,000.00 is the shortfall on the pavilion but to give more than that sum of money without good reason would be wrong and she would consider making a complaint against the Parish Council. The LPFA in her opinion have done a great job but it is leased land – who knows what Elvedon Estates may do in the future. There are other areas in the village which could benefit from funding.

Finally, another member of the public also a member of the LPFA said he had come to the meeting to speak in favour of the Parish Council giving more money to the LPFA but he acknowledged that there are other areas that could benefit from funding. However, on balance, he is of the opinion that the Parish Council is not showing strong support for the LPFA project if they feel unable to make a further contribution – the LPFA do not want a regular contribution but they would like a good one-off payment.

6c)SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

Having listened to concern about proposed development at Lakenheath Hall and possible impact on Hall Drive, Cllr Noble said he would raise the matter with SCC Highways – FHDC do not have to take

cognisance of SCC Highways views/comments but they are a statutory consultee. Work has commenced at the library (to allow for better “scooter” access). In answer to his question, Cllr Noble was advised that Cllr Smith is the PC “liaison” at SNT meetings. Cllr Noble said that he would, at his peril, like to pass on a few comment regarding the Playing Field project. He is of the opinion that Lakenheath PC “reserves” are high but he did also acknowledge that there are various issues which could cost the PC a fair amount of money e.g. lighting – concrete posts and G39 issues. Perhaps this is the time to ringfence monies for various areas of spending. However, it is a project that he believes in and it ticks the health and community boxes!

Cllr Gathercole said that still nothing has been done on C600, albeit signage is supposed to be ready. Cllr Noble will chase this up.

Cllr Smith has been told that all houses on the “Grange” development have been completed but despite the developer having paid over agreed monies (£106) for lighting there is still no lighting. Cllr Noble will look into this.

The Clerk said she had received a couple of things from SCC – telephone call to say that the A1101 between Kenny Hill and Shippea Hill may be closed for a short period over the next month to allow for tree felling (interfering with power lines) and a communication from SCC Street Lighting Department detailing energy costs for year to 31st March 2010. Energy has increased by 5.86% on last year’s costs. Cllr Chambers said that she had met with Cllr Noble and others to discuss traffic problems in Anchor Lane. A suggestion has already been put forward and this is now being “tweaked” before going out to consultation. At the same time they looked at Lloyds Bank area of High Street - may be that yellow lines will be extended so that drivers coming round bend (from Hockwold direction) will not suddenly meet with parked cars.

Action Points – Cllr Noble to speak with SCC Highways re plans for Lakenheath Hall / Hall Drive and to chase up signage for C600.

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

6b) FOREST HEATH DISTRICT COUNCIL

There was nothing.

The meeting was reopened

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

Cllr Smith said that he had received an acknowledgement from the Ombudsman - trees felled in the Mallards to make way for garage contrary to earlier planning agreement.

8.PLANNING MATTERS

a) TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

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

There were objections to:-

F/2009/0413/FUL-demolition of bungalow, erection of 1 chalet bungalow & 2 detached dwellings – 28 Broom Road

F/2009/0446/COU-continuation of planning permission for siting of mobile home – 52A Sedge Fen

F/2009/0550/RMA – erection of 1 bungalow with vehicular access – 17A Back Street

b) TO CONSIDER- ANY OUTSTANDING APPLICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE

There is 1 application in circulation.

c)TO CONSIDER PLANNING APPLICATIONS F/2009/0456/FUL and F/2009/0552/CAC – Lakenheath Hall and F/2009/0560/FUL – land at 65, 69 & 73 Station Road

All plans had previously been circulated to all Councillors. Cllr Gathercole said that he was able to make the following information available to the meeting – FHDC LDF have this site down for “ no more than 15 dwellings and suitable conversion of Hall (3 dwellings). It is to be low density housing with one access off Station Road (B1112). The site had been (until illegal felling of the trees) a wooded area so appropriate replanting must be carried out. Cllr Gathercole was further able to tell the meeting that, in its current form, the application is down for refusal. He added, however, that there is no objection at FHDC to the demolition of the stables block and the Conservationists have not raised any objection either. FHDC have said that properties already built on plots 8 & 10 are due for demolition (built contrary to previous planning permission) and although those properties plots 9 & 18 can remain they require modification; fire turning areas are an issue; the chalk wall must be reinstated and the affordable home cannot be sited where proposed as this obstructs the view of the Hall. He said that there will be no repeat (failings) of last time. The Parish Council were united in their opposition to the current plans. Cllr Gentle said that the site had been vandalised over the years – pond had been filled in; 61 trees had been felled and there is no relationship between existing surroundings (bungalows) and current proposals. He is of the opinion that the original approved plans are the appropriate ones for the site. His views were echoed by other Councillors – Cllr Chambers feels that the wall needs to be reinstated sooner rather than later; Cllr Smith had spent some time on the plans and identified areas of FHDC Local Plan Policy and National Planning Policy which are not being met by the current applications; Cllr Morley said he could not imagine what life had been like for neighbouring residents for the last few years, the site is a disgrace. It was, therefore, proposed, seconded and agreed by all that F/2009/0552/CAC should be objected to and indeed the stable block should be reinstated with sympathy and not in conflict with the Hall. On F/2009/0456/FUL, again objection citing proposals are not in line with FHDC Local Plan Policy 4.14 d) & e) and 4.15 b) & e). It further breaches PPGN15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994) paras. 2.14 & 2.39

On F/2009/0560/FUL – Cllr Gathercole said that this site had been under discussion several times – on this occasion number of proposed dwellings increased again to 23 – all previous objections should still apply. The Clerk said that in addition there had been comments about possible increased flooding on Station Road. It was agreed by all Councillors that in addition to previous comments submitted on earlier application the Clerk should identify perceived flooding risk.

Resolved – Full Parish Council objections to all three Planning Applications identified above – Clerk to advise FHDC accordingly

9. LAKENHEATH HALL

Cllr Gathercole updated the meeting with the latest position on proceedings. The hearing has been adjourned until 12th November, when a date for the trial will be fixed. The FHDC Monitoring Officer has confirmed the site is being cleared albeit at a slower than hoped for pace.

10. LAKENHEATH CEMETERY

a) TO RECEIVE REPORT FROM CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Cllr Rissen said that on her last visit to the Cemetery it looked neat and the Caretaker was doing his best to keep on top of the falling leaves – reiterated by Cllr Chambers.

b) TO CONFIRM GRANT OF EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS

There was one – Mrs Lakin of Ipswich – the late David Palmer of Quayside Court .

11. CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA – UPDATE/WORK TO BE DONE

The Clerk said that the ROSPA inspection had been done on 7th September 2009 and she had the report if anyone wished to look at it. The inspection had been satisfactory. No work needed. One or two areas of

“medium risk “ identified – mole hills, a trip hazard and the junior multi unit – south facing slide and two possible areas of head/torso entrapment. All weekly inspections have been satisfactory.

12.ALLOCATION OF A PORTION OF UNDELEY ROAD SALE MONIES TO LAKENHEATH PLAYING FIELDS

Cllr Gathercole said that various papers (note from Cllr Gathercole, as Chair of the PC; letter from Peter Heard FHDC Legal Services Manager; letter from Steve Hills PC Internal Auditor and LPFA Auditor; copy of PC minutes April 2004; copy of a letter sent by Clerk to LPFA asking for brief details of business plan and costings/ funds secured; LPFA letter of reply) relating to this item had previously been circulated to each Parish Councillor and at the last meeting he had said a great deal on this issue. *Cllr Gathercole left the meeting* in order that a discussion and any resolution could take place. Cllr Chambers took the Chair. Cllr Rolph said that the LPFA have done a good job thus far and that the village would want the LPFA to be in it for the long term. Having read the papers he was of the opinion that the figure of £40,000 mentioned in the papers (as above) should be given to the LPFA as long as the money was for specific use. Cllr Gentle said that all bodies requesting money have to be treated equally - there is a protocol when Parish Councils give money – there should be a letter from the requesting body and the money should be for a specific purpose. He had tried to make this point at the last meeting. Cllr Rolph proposed that the LPFA should be have £40,000 ringfenced and for specific use from Undley Road sale monies. This was seconded. Cllr Smith proposed an amendment – LPFA should receive £15,000 now, as agreed at the last meeting, and £15,000 should be included in the Precept for next year. There was no seconder for this amendment. The Clerk asked for clarification of the original proposal, saying that £15,000 had been agreed at the last meeting (shortfall on capital project) – would the proposed £40,000 include that figure? It was agreed it would. All members voted in favour of Cllr Rolph’s proposal.

Resolved –sum of £25,000 from sale monies to be ringfenced for LPF under S19 of 1976 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act to be used as/when project funding requested

The Chairman returned to the meeting.

13.ST MARY’S CHURCHYARD – TREE POLLARDING – TO RECEIVE QUOTES

The Clerk updated the meeting on the situation along the boundary wall of St Mary’s Churchyard. There had been a complaint from Mr Bedford of Back Street that lime trees are causing problems (overhanging his garden so that nothing grows; encouraging wasps to which his wife is allergic and stopping smoke rising through the chimney properly. Accordingly a meeting was arranged between Father Robert Leach; Chairman of the PC, Cllr Gathercole; FHDC Tree Officer Mr McCavish and the Clerk. It was agreed that the trees needed pollarding – the Clerk was asked to complete necessary Planning Application obo Parish Council and she would seek at least 3 quotes for work to be done. Prior to Planning Application being completed Cllr Gathercole reminded the Clerk that during St Mary’s Fayre in the summer there had been a comment about the trees along the front boundary of the Churchyard. The Clerk was asked to contact Father Leach to get his approval for this additional work to be carried out (to date there has been no reply from Father Leach) ; to include the additional work on the Planning Application and to obtain 2 separate quotes for each area. The Planning Application has been registered at FHDC but has not yet been put out for comment but the Clerk has received quotes and would like PC approval for quote to be accepted so that everything is in place for work to be carried out ASAP. The Clerk had written to 4 contractors, 1 did not wish to quote. The first quote was £250 and £500; the second quote was £200 plus VAT and £1190 plus VAT and the third quote was for £3000 plus VAT (separate quotes were not given). It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to accept the first quote - £250 and £500. *Resolved – quote in sum of £250 and £500 to be accepted, Clerk to confirm with contractor.*

14."ADOPT A KIOSK"- FUTURE OF TELEPHONE BOX OPPOSITE QUAYSIDE COURT

The Clerk read a letter from BT asking if PC would like to "adopt" the red kiosk opposite Quayside Court for sum of £1. Usage over last year – 122 calls. The telephony would be removed and the PC could decide how they may wish to use the kiosk. There was some concern about possible vandalism and resulting cost of repair work. However, it was proposed, seconded and voted 4 to 3, with 1 abstention, in favour of adopting the kiosk for £1.

Resolved – Clerk to make arrangements for "adoption" of Kiosk for £1.

Action Point – Clerk was asked to make enquiries with BT to determine whether or not they are going to carry out longstanding (9 months) repairs to kiosk on Eriswell Road

15.AGRICULTURAL WAGES ORDER PAY – 2009 & NALC CLERK'S SALARY SETTLEMENT – 2009

The Clerk had previously circulated a paper detailing 2009 national pay awards for Agricultural Workers (covers Village Keeper and part time Keeper)and Clerks. Clerks annual leave has been increased by 1 day a year to 21 days minimum. It was noted that all 3 PC employees have contracts and are remunerated in accordance with AWB and NALC . It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all that the 2009 increases should be ratified.

Resolved – revised settlements to be put into operation.

16.STREET LIGHTING – NIGHT LIGHTING

The Clerk asked if the Councillors had views on part-night lighting or light dimming that she could feed back to SCC. The Parish Council, with the exception of 2 Councillors, are of the view that lighting should not be reduced from its current level.

Action Point – Clerk to write to SCC confirming that PC not in favour of light reduction at night.

17. PRECEPT

The Clerk had previously circulated 3 papers to the Councillors – 1 narrative and 2 tables. She has reduced accounting headings so that Cash Book /Precept/Accounts will all have same headings – details of amalgamations have been given. Details of previous two years expenditure listed along with expenditure this year to 30 September 2009 and probable expenditure to 31 March 2010 have been given. There are areas of underspend and overspend. Overspend needs to be addressed. The Clerk believes that apart from lighting (there is a ringfenced reserve of £41,000 towards possible lighting expenditure – concrete and G39 issues) there need to be other ringfenced reserves for future necessary expenditure. She asked if changes she has made have been understood and whether any Councillor would like further information. There were no questions or requests.

18.FINANCIAL MATTERS

a)PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

A list of payments covering the months of October/November was presented to the Councillors. It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to accept them

b)BANK RECONCILIATION

A bank reconciliation for the month of September 2009 was presented to the Councillors.It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to accept the reconciliation.

c)EXTERNAL AUDIT

The External Audit has been carried out and has been satisfactory – appropriate notices have already been displayed. The Clerk said that some readers may have observed that a report had been attached –

relates to a change in the way VAT was treated this year. As a result of this BDO Stoy Hayward asked for changes to some of previous year's figures. However, the report states that the adjusted figures are correct and no further action is required. It was, therefore, proposed, seconded and agreed by all to approve and accept the completed Annual Return 31 March 2009.

Resolved – Completed Annual Return 31 March 2009 approved and accepted by PC

19.SPONSORSHIP REQUEST

A letter from Fliss Cleverley, a resident, asking for sponsorship for a trip volunteering for a month at a sports academy in Uganda next year was read out by the Clerk. The Clerk said that, worthwhile though the trip would be, the Parish Council, in her opinion, is not able to make money available for such a cause – no legal power. However, if PC agree, she would encourage Fliss Cleverley to put a brief article in Lakenheath Times to see if that might generate sponsorship. Parish Council in agreement with this course of action.

Action Point – Clerk to write to Fliss Cleverley encouraging her to put brief article in Lakenheath Times

20.CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk read out a letter of thanks, for £200 S137 donation, from West Suffolk Voluntary Association for the Blind; she also read a letter from FHDC Standards Committee in which they have offered to come to PC meetings to speak about the work of the Committee/Code of Conduct. The October Suffolk Acre Update and FHDC November meeting dates have been received. Finally, Norfolk County Council Minerals and Waste Development Framework Options have been received. Any Councillor wishing to look at them can find them in the office – if comments to be made needs to be done at next PC meeting.

21. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Future of telephone kiosk on Eriswell Road and Town Twinning

22. TO NOTE FUTURE DATES

Tuesday 24 November 2009, firstly, 10.00am till 1.00pm Red Lodge Millenium Centre a consultation to discuss FHDC's Health Improvement Strategy 2009-12 and, secondly, SALC Forest Heath Area meeting – Mildenhall 7.00pm till 9.00pm

23.TO NOTE DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday 7th December 2009.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.00pm