

MINUTES OF MEETING OF LAKENHEATH PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE METHODIST CHURCH CHAPEL
ON MONDAY 7th December 2009

Present :- Messrs D Gathercole (Chairman)

J Gentle

I Frost

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; PCSOs Jason Thomas and Terry Joynson; Cllr Simon Flack (FHDC)
Cllr Colin Noble (SCC)

4 members of the public were present and 1 member of the press.

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 – there is to be a deployment to Afghanistan and it is possible this may take place over the “Festive” period. Cllr Smith said that he had recently encountered 2 instances of inappropriate overtaking by what seemed to be American vehicles. One set of registration numbers has been obtained – to be forwarded by him to Sqdn Ldr Neild. There being no further comments, the Chairman extended good wishes for the Festive period to Sqdn Ldr Neild and his wife. These were reciprocated.

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

The meeting was opened.

1.APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

2.DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

The meeting was closed.

3. POLICE MATTERS

PCSO Jason Thomas said that it would be his last PC meeting – he is continuing with Suffolk Constabulary but as a Police Constable. He hopes to return to the area. His PCSO post will be filled and the new incumbent will be working with PCSO Terry Joyner – he remains in post. The report for November continues to show a fall in reported crime – 55.8% reduction on November 2008. Of the 15 reported crimes for the month – 9 are relevant to the meeting :- 2 instances of vehicle damage; 2 instances of drink/driving; 1 theft of home oil; 1 instance where numerous drugs have been found at a house –

ongoing; 2 thefts from motor vehicles and 1 burglary. The messages are be vigilant, report anything suspicious and keep valuables out of view (cars). PCSO Thomas, addressing Cllr Smith's concerns re inappropriate overtaking said if vehicle registrations are noted the matter can be reported to the Police. Cllr Sizer said that she understood a warrant served on a resident thought to be selling tobacco goods to underage children had been executed successfully. PCSO Thomas confirmed that there had been a successful multi agency operation and again urged people to report anything suspicious. The Chairman of the Parish Council thanked PCSO Thomas for his hard work in the village and wished him all the best in the future.

The meeting was reopened.

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

Referring to their recently lost appeal, in respect of Boundary Commission Review, a member of the public wondered how much money had been spent by FHDC in this process. He has also noticed that a recently advertised job at FHDC is offering a Final Salary Pension Schemesomething which is costly and being dropped by most businesses. Why are FHDC still operating this scheme?

6b)FOREST HEATH DISTRICT COUNCIL

There was nothing to report. Cllr Chambers produced a large poster, advertising an event at the Plough Public House which she and her husband had removed from a post in the village. She regularly does this and would like FHDC policy on fly posting confirmed. The meeting was in agreement that the Clerk should write to both, the Enforcement Officer at FHDC, Malcolm Allison and the landlord of the Plough Public House.

Action Point – Clerk to write to FHDC and Plough Landlord re flyposting

6c)SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

Cllr Noble added his thanks to work done by PCSO Jason Thomas. He confirmed with Cllr Smith that the bollard in High Street was now back in place – but light is not working. He further confirmed that Highway are looking at "The Grange", Eriswell Road but that they have not yet been asked to look at Hall Drive. He said that he would just "chip in" on final salary pension scheme – nationally negotiated arrangement. On Boundary Review, he too is concerned about cost and the waste of time and effort, especially as it may run out of time. Cllr Noble asked if we had received a letter from SCC re White Fen Drove – successful representations. The Clerk confirmed that she had received the letter – PC had made representations (work carried out by Cllr Smith) . Cllr Noble said that it was most unusual to be successful in such cases. Cllr Smith asked about repairs to footpath in Back Street – Cllr Noble said that there is no budget for the work but he acknowledged the point that it is well used by the frail and elderly, especially as the Nursing Home is situated there. Cllr Sizer thanked Cllr Noble for efforts in getting late bus from College Heath Middle School back to the village – this allows village children to take part in extra curricula activities. Cllr Rissen said that the hedge outside 19 High Street has still not been cut back – confirmed by Cllr Noble that due procedural process is in place and happening. Cllr Gathercole asked that SCC look again at Mutford Green (at its junction with Station Road) – problem of standing water. He also said that the signage for the C600 (Sedge Fen Road) is still not in place. Clerk

confirmed, for the benefit of all present that road closure at Lakenheath Station proposed for 12/13th December 2009 is no longer required – work completed.

*Action Points – Cllr Noble to chase up signage for C600 and will make enquiries re Mutford Green
Cllr Noble was thanked for his contribution and he too was given good wishes for Festive Season. Again, these were reciprocated. He left the meeting.*

The meeting was reopened

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

Cllr Smith said that he had received another letter recently from the Ombudsman (FHDC Planning) - they are currently awaiting further information from the Ombudsman.

Cllr Gathercole, speaking on the issue of monies for the Playing Fields (minute page 557 item 12 refers), said he was of the opinion that the £40,000 which the Parish Council have agreed to give to the Playing Fields Association would be better paid over to FHDC as they will be meeting the cost and there is a "Project Manager" in place. There was some debate on this – Cllr Smith said that £25,000 (of the £40,000) was to be paid over as and when incurred (as and when requests received from Playing Fields association). This interpretation was disputed by Cllr Chambers. Cllr Gathercole in his role as Chairman said that the matter would not be discussed further.

Cllr Smith left the meeting.

8.PLANNING MATTERS

a) TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Clerk said that 11 applications had been considered – 7 were not objected to.

There were no objections to:-

F/2009/0580/FUL-erection of 4 x 8mtr lighting poles – Undley House, 61 Undley Rd

F/2009/0583/FUL-erection 4 chalet bungalows/garages & new vehicular access-6-8 Cemetery Rd

F/2009/0615/FUL-erection 4 terraced houses & associated works-Old Co-op, 86 High St

F/2009/0638/CAT-pollard 1 lime tree-St Mary's Churchyard

F/2009/0624/CAT-fell 1 weeping willow;1 white mulberry;1 yew & 5 apple trees-Lime Tree Bungalow, Back St

F/2009/0672/FUL-replace 5 wooden windows & 1 wooden door with aluminium windows& door – 37 High St

F/2009/0651/HOU-erection single storey front extension – 51 Caudle Ave

There were objections to the remaining 4 applications:-

F/2009/0456/FUL-part retrospective,erection 18 dwellings (7affordable) & conversion of Lakenheath Hall into 3 dwellings – Lakenheath Hall, Hall Drive

F/2009/0552/CAC-demolition existing garage block adj. Lak. Hall – Lakenheath Hall, Hall Drive

F/2009/0560/FUL-erection 23 dwellings, including access road- land at rear of 65/69/73 Station Rd

F/2009/0616/TPO-fell 11Scots Pines & 1 Leyland Cypress – 37 Eriswell Road

b) TO CONSIDER- ANY OUTSTANDING APPLICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE

One street naming application **SN/2009/0050-Old Co-op** had been circulated around Planning Committee; however, there has been no agreement. FHDC have received a request from the developer requesting that consideration be given to naming the development either Old Bakery Yard or Old Dairy Yard. FHDC have acknowledged that neither name was on the PC submitted list of names. It was considered by the PC that there is no "historical" connection/basis for either of the developer's suggestions. After some discussion it was proposed, seconded and agreed, with 3 abstentions, that the PC would like to have the development named Saxon Place.

Resolved – Old Co-op development should be named Saxon Place – Clerk to advise FHDC accordingly.

9. OLD CHICORY FACTORY – TO CONSIDER AND ADDRESS LOCAL CONCERNS

The Clerk had received copies of correspondence written to West Norfolk District Council and FHDC expressing concern at activities of Murfitts (tyre shredding) at the Old Chicory Factory by Lakenheath Station in light of the recent fire at Littleport. She went on to read a letter sent to Hockwold Parish Council by FHDC. Although many Councillors had some concern at the volume of tyres processed/stored they are of the opinion that if Murfitts are seen to be adhering to their legal requirements there is little that can be done, there would have to be firm evidence of infringement of the requirements – there is a Certificate of Lawfulness in place. It was, therefore, proposed, seconded and agreed by all, with 3 abstentions, that no further action is taken.

Resolved – no further action other than reply to Hockwold Parish Council

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 work despite the rather bad weather.

b) TO CONFIRM GRANT OF EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS

There was one – Mrs Josephine Mandy Dahlman – the late Robert Dahlman of The Paddocks .

c) TREES IN NEW CEMETERY

Cllr Gathercole said that as the FHDC Tree Officer had not yet been to the Cemetery this item would be tabled until January meeting.

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

Clerk said that no work is necessary. She wondered, however, if either of the FHDC Councillors was aware of the fact that FHDC seem to have undertaken inspections of all children's playgrounds in their area. Neither Councillor was aware of this – it will be taken up by them.

Action Point – FHDC Councillors to investigate FHDC programme of inspections of children's play areas.

12. TELEPHONE KIOSKS

In addressing the issue, previously raised by Cllr Morley, re Eriswell Road telephone kiosk, the Clerk confirmed that BT Customer Services have requested that the kiosk has "a special clean and the glass is repaired". The Clerk has a call reference should there continue to be problems.

Regarding "adopting " kiosk opposite Quayside Court, the Clerk has not yet heard back from FHDC and their permission for removal of telephony has to be given before application can be made to BT.

13. TOWN/PARISH TWINNING

Cllr Gathercole had not brought papers with him but he did wonder if such a scheme is of interest to the PC. Cllr Chambers, speaking with previous experience of such a scheme, considered it to be worthwhile. This was reiterated by Cllr Gentle. Accordingly, it was decided to table this item until the January meeting.

14. PRECEPT

The Clerk had previously circulated a note and a further outturn report. Forecasting is not easy but indications suggest that lighting costs could increase by about 5%; wages/salaries 1.5% was roughly the increase this year; the majority of the PC insurances are now on 3/5 year agreements making budgetting easier. The only ringfenced reserve is lighting -£41,000 but with expected expenditure perhaps this should be increased and consideration given to setting up other areas of ringfenced reserves e.g. St Mary's Church Wall; machinery renewals and Cemetery Cottage. Decisions need to be made on what is needed and what would the PC like to do for the village in the next year. Budgets suggested by Clerk for

salaries/wages; cottage/chapel; machinery expenditure; street lighting; admin; insurance; subscriptions and training were accepted. Cllr Gathercole asked the meeting to consider again whether or not to buy a new tractor (could trade in now or run current one into ground). Majority view was to precept for new tractor and to go for another Shibaura, as the Village Keeper is now used to it. Allocations were made for each heading, including £2,500 for Village Hall and a £5,000 "contingency" fund. Advertising in Lakenheath Times is hoped to bring in around £3,000 - £3,500 a year so £3,000 has been precepted for it next year. Spending for year 2010/11 estimated to be £105,645. This would be a 16.99% increase on current year. Asked whether this would be allowed, the Clerk said it would be but 5% increase is usually considered to be maximum. It was, therefore, proposed to go ahead with Precept of £105,645 for year to 31st March 2011. The proposal was accepted by all, with 1 abstention. Billing Instruction to FHDC signed by Chairman and 2 Councillors and countersigned by Clerk.

The Clerk asked the meeting if they would approve FHDC's timetable for payment of Precept – 50% on 16th April 2010; 15% on 16th July 2010 and 35% on 17th September 2010.

It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to accept timetable for payment of Precept.

Resolved – Precept for year to 31st March 2011 set at £105,645.

Payment timetable – accepted.

Action Points – Clerk to return Precept papers to FHDC and to confirm timetable for payment

3 quotes for new Shibaura tractor (part exchange for current tractor) to be obtained by Clerk.

15.FINANCIAL MATTERS

a)PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

A list of payments covering the months of November/December 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 October 2009 was presented to the Councillors. It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to accept the reconciliation.

14.PRECEPT

Having looked at bank balance the Chairman suggested "revisiting" item 14 – "Precept". There was no objection from the table. Cllr Gathercole said in view of current bank balance and possible balance at the end of the year it would be more prudent and acceptable to pay for new tractor from current "reserves" and reduce Precept accordingly. It was further suggested that the contingency fund be decreased by £1,000 to £4,000 and that nothing would be put in next year's Precept for St Mary's Church Wall but that £10,000 would be a ringfenced reserve this year. An amount of £5,000 would be a ringfenced reserve for the Cemetery Cottage this year. The foregoing amendments would reduce the Precept to £93,645 for year to 31st March 2011, an increase of 3.7%.

It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to amend Precept to £93,645 for year to 31st March 2011 and to ringfence reserves of £10,000 for St Mary's Church Wall and £5,000 for Cemetery Cottage in this financial year.

Resolved – Precept for year to 31st March 2011 set at £93,645

To ringfence reserves for Church Wall and Cemetery Cottage - £10,000 and £5,000 respectively.

Action Point – Precepting papers amended accordingly.

16.VILLAGE HALL- TO CONSIDER REQUEST FOR GRANT TOWARDS REMEDIAL WORK

The Clerk read a letter from the Treasurer to Village Hall Committee, Mr Cross. He is requesting, obo Village Hall Committee, the sum of £713.00 in order to deal with an active woodworm infestation. Their

finances are stretched due to on-going improvements. It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to grant the Village Hall the sum of £713.00 to meet the cost of woodworm treatment.

Resolved – PC to donate sum of £713.00 to Village Hall as per their request.

17. CORRESPONDENCE

FHDC had sent a letter wondering if PC would “Rural Coffee Caravan” to visit village next year – provides residents with information on policing; local authorities and Citizens Advice Bureaux (One Stop Shop) – PC not interested. The Clerk read out Boundary Committee response to failed appeal – they regret waste of time and money and wish now to get on with giving advice to Secretary of State. The Clerk had also received report from SCC Environmental Monitoring 2008/9; Fieldwork; Countryside Voice; Zurich Municipal Court Circular; Suffolk Wildlife magazines and list of December Committee meetings at FHDC. All are available at Parish Office.

18. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

There were no suggestions.

19. TO NOTE FUTURE DATES

There were no dates to be noted.

20. TO NOTE DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday 11th January 2010.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.00pm with the Chairman wishing all of those present “Season’s Greetings”