

LITTLE MELTON ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
at THE VILLAGE HALL, MILL ROAD, LITTLE MELTON
TUESDAY 15th MAY 2007 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT	Stewart Cable (Chairman), Duncan Frazer (Vice-Chairman) from 7.40 p.m., Tony Berry, Wilf Chamberlain and John Heaser. The Chairman welcomed the “new” Parish Council. Also present were District Councillors Garry Wheatley (and from 7.50 p.m.) Christopher Kemp and one member of the public.
ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE PC	Nominations were sought for the position of Chairman of the Parish Council for the ensuing year. On a proposal by John Heaser, which was seconded by Tony Berry, Stewart Cable was nominated and as no other nominations were put forward Stewart was elected to the office of Chairman of the Parish Council for the year 2007/2008.
ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE PC	Nominations were requested for the position of Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council for the coming year. On a proposal by Wilf Chamberlain, which was seconded by Stewart Cable, Tony Berry was nominated and as no other nominations were forthcoming Tony was elected to be Vice-Chairman for the year 2007/2008.
APOLOGIES	An apology for absence (illness) was received from County Councillor Judith Virgo.
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	The Chairman asked if any members wished to declare an interest in an item on the agenda. No declarations of interest were forthcoming.
MINUTES	The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10 th April were – subject to the correction that this meeting had been held on 10 th April and not on 16 th April – on a proposal by Wilf Chamberlain, which was seconded by Tony Berry, accepted as a true record of the business conducted. A copy of the minutes was therefore signed accordingly by the Chairman, for retention in the Parish Council records.
PUBLIC/DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR PARTICIPATION	Newly elected District Councillors Christopher Kemp and Garry Wheatley explained that (a) Christopher Kemp was (still) Chairman of the SNC Scrutiny Committee and there were now three other Scrutiny Committees, and (b) Garry Wheatley was Chairman of the Personnel and Property Committee (SNC employed 461 staff) and also remained a member of the Planning Committee and the North West Area Planning Committee.
NEW CODE OF CONDUCT	The Clerk of the Council drew the attention of the Parish Councillors to the introduction of a new (revised) Code of Conduct that must be adopted, by the Parish Council, by 1 st October 2007. The Standards Board of England state that the new Code of Conduct will ensure that all councillors are subject to the same standards across the country and are encouraging councils to adopt the Code at the first opportunity. A “Model

	<p>Code for Parish Councils” has been prepared and the advice is that parish councils should adopt the new Code unamended with one exception. The recommended exception is not mandatory but would give members with a prejudicial interest the same rights as members of the public to speak at a meeting on an issue and then leave before the main discussion and vote.</p> <p>In order for such a provision to apply (paragraph 12 (2)) the Parish Council will need to pass a resolution adopting the new Model Code of Conduct, including paragraph 12 (2). It is not enough to adopt the Code “as applicable to parish councils”.</p> <p>Where the additional provision is adopted the Standards Board recommends that, in order to provide clarity, parish councils should have standing orders in place which set out clearly the circumstances whereby members of the public can attend meetings of the authority for the purpose of making representations, giving evidence or answering questions. If the Parish Council does not provide members of the public with any right to speak, paragraph 12 (2) will have no effect on the Parish Council. This means that councillors with a prejudicial interest would have to continue to leave the meeting after declaring the nature and extent of their interest. It was noted that the Standards Board for England must be notified when the Parish Council have adopted the new Code of Conduct.</p> <p>In conclusion it was agreed that every member of the Parish Council, including co-opted members, be given – in advance of the next Parish Council meeting - a copy of the Standards Board short explanatory letter of 1st May and that the Parish Council take appropriate formal action at the Parish Council meeting on 19th June.</p>
CO-OPTION PROCEDURE	<p>It was explained that the co-option of two further members – to bring the Parish Council membership up to seven (full) members – should be undertaken as soon as possible and the Clerk sought clarification of the procedure the Parish Council wished to implement.</p> <p>Following discussion it was (on a proposal by Tony Berry which was seconded by John Heaser) agreed, as it was understood that Graham Tomlin and Joan Wheatley were happy to “continue” their membership, that the Clerk would ask Graham and Joan to confirm, in writing, accordingly and if this occurred then these two co-options would be accepted and the Parish Council would again be composed of its full membership.</p> <p>In the event that a vacancy or vacancies remained the Clerk would instigate local advertising to seek other parishioners willing to be considered for co-option.</p>
PARISH AMENITIES	<p>TENNIS COURT RELINING</p> <p>Following the previous Parish Council meeting the Clerk had sought further quotations (in addition to the quotation via Norfolk County Services) and was now able to report that three other contractors had submitted prices, namely:-</p>

*Cambridge Tennis Courts - £270-00 plus VAT,

*Doe Sports Ltd. - £345-00 plus Vat,

and

*Gary Crook (Pulham Market) - £200-00 including VAT.

Following discussion and on a proposal by Duncan Frazer, which was seconded by Tony Berry, the Clerk was instructed to write and accept Gary Crook's quotation for the white relining of the hard tennis court on the village playing field.

DOG WASTE BIN

The Chairman confirmed that budgetary provision (2007/2008) had been made for the purchase of another (3rd) dog waste bin. The initial consideration was that this be sited either along Great Melton Road or along the cul de sac section at the bottom of School Lane. However it was now understood that the local school's Travel Plan was proposing dog waste bins be sited along the pedestrian routes predominantly used to and from Little Melton First School. With this in mind the Parish Council agreed to defer purchasing and agreeing a location for the erection of the next dog waste bin until the school staff/governors had informed the Parish Council of their recommended siting. John Heaser kindly agreed to consult Kathy Judkins on this issue and report back.

VILLAGE HALL – REPLACEMENT OF EMERGENCY EXIT DOORS

The Clerk of the Parish Council reported that in accordance with instructions he had written to Norfolk Fire Service at Hethersett in order to ascertain that the replacement doors would comply with the latest requirements in respect of minimum width for egress etc. The telephone response from the County Fire Service had been that providing the opening was no smaller than existing there would be no problems with replacing the old timber double doors with new UPVC double doors. This response assumed push bars, appropriate signing above and external emergency lighting. The only real issue with regard to width of opening was said to be if this was a disabled access, i.e. ramp etc.

Subsequently the Clerk had made further enquiries with CNC (who had taken over responsibility for building control matters from SNC) and established that the criteria also included numbers of users etc. and that in general terms, for 240 people (the maximum prescribed for the village hall) the requirement for the minimum opening width was 1150mm. In consequence and as the minimum width was not an issue the Parish Council requested that the Clerk seek quotations for replacing one set of emergency exit double doors to the village hall.

REPLACEMENT OF TIMBER SLATS TO BOTH SEATS IN YOUNG CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA

Following instructions the Clerk had sought quotations for the replacement of the defective slats to the seating and received quotations on the basis of replacing all six slats to each seat of:-

	<p>John Symonds - £400-00 plus VAT H.W.J. Blake - £355-00 plus VAT.</p> <p>Some discussion then ensued and the outcome of this was that the Parish Council would leave the matter with Wilf Chamberlain who said he could arrange for the “Estate” to probably replace the worst two slats on each seat with oak timber at a relatively low cost.</p> <p>The Clerk would respond to the unsuccessful contractors.</p> <p>VILLAGE FETE/MEANDER</p> <p>The Clerk reported that Helen Rattenbury had rung him on 9th May to ask if was acceptable to use (a) the tennis court and (b) the football pitch area of the village playing field for the village fete which would be held on Saturday 16th June between the hours of 11.00 am and 4.00 pm. The Clerk confirmed that after consulting the Chairman he had informed Mrs Rattenbury that the Parish Council had no objection to such use, subject to the normal conditions.</p> <p>FOOTBALL PITCH</p> <p>The Chairman reported that a representative of Hethersett Wanderers FC had recently mentioned to him that his club was contemplating forming a team as well as continuing to run the Sunday team. In consequence the question had been asked if the Parish Council was prepared to improve the pitch by removing the slight dip that ran across the lower half of pitch.</p> <p>As a first step in consideration of this request the Clerk was instructed to ask for some quotations for having the pitch (a) rolled and (b) harrowed and rolled prior to the commencement of the next football season. Other considerations such as having top soil put down, seeding or having turf laid etc would need consideration in the light of the cost involved and particularly taking into account the cost the Parish Council was already incurring on a regular basis/had incurred in improving the pitch and associated facilities. It was questioned whether Hethersett Wanderers would be prepared to incur the costs/some of the costs involved in any improvements.</p>
<p>AFFORDABLE HOUSING</p>	<p>The Clerk was requested to formally contact Hastoe Housing Association and ask that the Parish Council be informed of the latest progress, particularly with regard to sufficient expressions of interest from local people for both the rented and shared ownership new properties.</p>
<p>HIGHWAYS</p>	<p>The only item for discussion and consideration was the email enquiry from Kathy Judkins, a parent governor at Little Melton First School, who had notified the Clerk on 23rd March that the school governors were in the process of producing a School Travel Plan and would like the opportunity to talk over the proposals with the Parish Council. One of the items for discussion was said to be the extension of the footpath along Mill Road. Difficulties in communication, and agreeing of dates for a meeting, had resulted in some delay in taking this matter forward.</p> <p>Subsequently John Heaser had informed the Clerk of the</p>

	<p>Parish Council that another governor, Jo Buxton, had pursued the matter with him and after consulting the Parish Council Chairman had agreed to meet Kathy Judkins on 14th May and then report the outcome to the Parish Council at its meeting on 15th May.</p> <p>John Heaser therefore reported that the governors were seeking improvements to promote and achieve “Safer and Healthier Journeys to School” including traffic calming measures (installation of speed reducing humps) and the small extension of the footpath along the north/eastern side of Mill Road to ensure a continuous safe pedestrian route from the crossroads to Gibbs Close.</p> <p>The Parish Council considered that it should very strongly support the school’s objective of creating safer and healthier journeys to and from the local school and in consequence the Clerk was instructed to seek, via Norfolk County Council’s Planning & Transportation Department, implementation of the above mentioned proposals.</p> <p>The Clerk would also enquire if it was acceptable for existing road warning signs to be added to in order to increase awareness of the dangers near the local school and community play areas.</p> <p>In addition it was noted that the STP was seeking the erection of more dog waste bins, along the main pedestrian routes to school so that (hopefully) dog mess was not left on the footpaths. With this in mind and taking into account that the location of the next dog waste bin (budgeted for within the financial year 2007/2008) was a debateable point John Heaser kindly agreed to further consult Kathy Judkins to determine a recommended location.</p>
<p>PARISH PLAN</p>	<p>IMPROVEMENT IN COMMUNICATION</p> <p>The Chairman referred to the production of a single sheet of A4 (printed on both sides) quarterly newsletter to be drafted and produced by the Parish Council. It was envisaged that the first edition would cover news and programmed events from late June through to the end of September and with this in mind the Clerk was requested to write to local organisations and seek submissions. The Chairman and Clerk would consider the editing of the content of the first edition in the light of the permitted space within the final overall printed version.</p> <p>PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE</p> <p>John Heaser kindly agreed to look into improvements.</p> <p>OVERALL FUTURE COURSES OF ACTION</p> <p>Stewart Cable reported that a further meeting of the PPG had recently taken place and that those who had expressed an interest in participating in the various specialist areas of the PP were being approached to consider progress.</p>
<p>PLANNING APPLICATIONS</p>	<p>RESULT</p> <p>The Clerk reported the outcome of Miss Coleman’s proposed single storey rear extension to 87 School Lane which SNC had determined (15/4 – 21/4/07) since the previous Parish Council meeting - this was for “approval with conditions under</p>

delegated powers”.

PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

One planning application had required the views/comments of the Parish Council since the last meeting – this proposal being submitted by Mr A Parrott seeking planning permission for the erection of a single storey extension with “loft” bedroom to 15 School Lane. Both neighbours had been requested by the Clerk to notify the Parish Council of any views they wished to express but no objection had been communicated to the Clerk.

In consequence and as the development proposed was not controversial the Parish Council response to SNC had been “no views or comments”.

LAND OPPOSITE 4 THE CLOSE

This proposal which, contrary to the SNC officer recommendation,

had been approved by the District Council’s North West Area Planning Committee on 26th March had subsequently become subject to further consultation, with the Parish Council being notified on 27th April and 1st May that the proposal now included a drawing detailing a new footway to the front of the two existing residential properties along School Lane (Nos 68 &70) immediately to the north of the Close and also the resurfacing of the access drive (The Close) to serve the development.

In consequence the Clerk had notified the owners of 68 & 70 School Lane accordingly and asked for any views to be communicated to the Parish Council. The only response received by the Clerk had been from Keith and Jane Stock of 68 School Lane and this had included a copy of their objections to SNC. Mr and Mrs Stock had said they had no desire to have a footpath to the front of their property and had informed SNC that the revised drawing appeared to indicate use of land within their boundary and therefore the proposed use was not agreed to.

The owners of 70 School Lane had not responded to the Parish Council.

The Clerk of the Parish Council had – after consulting the Chairman – responded to SNC Planners commenting that:-

- *there is a parking problem in the vicinity of the development proposed,

- *there is – unless it continues for some way to the north along School Lane – little benefit in terms of safety in the proposed new very short section of footpath (assuming the land could be acquired),

- *the Parish Council has no knowledge of highway/ carriageway widths etc.

In conclusion, in responding to SNC, the Parish Council had, on 9th May, strongly recommended that further and better investigation by the Local Highway Authority was required prior to determination of the latest amended application submitted by Mrs. P. Killigrew/Mr. P. Eagle.

District Councillor Garry Wheatley concluded discussion of

	<p>the amended application by saying (a) there was a visibility problem and (b) it was questionable whether there is sufficient width for a footpath outside Nos 68 & 70 School Lane and that the case Planning Officer at SNC was consulting the Norfolk County Council Planning Department to determine the precise requirements.</p>
CLERK OF THE COUNCIL'S CORRESPONDENCE	<p>The schedule showing the correspondence received since the Parish Council meeting held on 10th April, plus some later received items was noted. The Clerk of the Council highlighted and explained the more significant items in some detail.</p>
BILLS/RECEIPTS	<p>On a proposal by Tony Berry, seconded by John Heaser, the undermentioned invoices were authorised for payment:-</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">GreenasGrass (Nocheese Ltd) - VPF maintenance for June 2007 £186-04</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Mr.R.Sinclair – 50% refund of cost of Broadband for period 25/4 – 24/5/07 £ 9-49</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Mr.R.Sinclair – refund for cost of telephone Norwich 811432 (official) £ 44-10</p> <p>Two receipts were reported namely (a) from Hethersett Wanderers FC for the hire of the football pitch for matches on 25/2, 18/3, 25/3 and 15/4/07 in the sum of £80-00 and (b) from SNC for the first 50% of the Parish Council precept for 2007/2008 in the sum of £6,000-00.</p>
BANK SIGNATORIES	<p>The Clerk presented the form from Barclays Bank that would facilitate the approval of the new signatories for authorising the payment of cheques etc and Stewart Cable (Chairman) and Tony Berry (Vice-Chairman) completed this as appropriate and returned these to the Clerk for him to pass onto the bank for immediate implementation.</p>
DATE OF NEXT MEETING	<p>The date of the next Parish Council meeting was confirmed as being Tuesday 19th June commencing at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall. There being no further business the meeting concluded at 9.10 pm.</p>
	<p><i>CHAIRMAN</i>.....</p> <p><i>DATE</i>.....</p>