

LITTLE MELTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
at the VILLAGE HALL, MILL ROAD, LITTLE MELTON
TUESDAY 18 OCTOBER 2011

PRESENT

John Heaser (Chair), Chris Starr (Vice- Chair), Tony Berry, Jan Kitchener, and until 9.00 pm, Jo Runeckles and Sally Sandford.

Also present was District Councillor Garry Wheatley and, from 8.20 pm, District Councillor Christopher Kemp.

In addition three members of the public were present (for the majority of the meeting), namely Mary Plage, John Symonds and Philip Wilson (Great Melton Road).

APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from County Councillor Judith Virgo, who was attending another meeting.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair asked if any members wished to declare an interest in any item/items on the agenda. No declarations were forthcoming.

MINUTES

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6 September 2011 were – on a proposal by Sally Sandford, which was seconded by Tony Berry, accepted as a true record of the business conducted and therefore a copy was signed and dated by the Chair for retention in the Parish Council records.

PUBLIC, DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR PARTICIPATION

District Councillors Christopher Kemp and Garry Wheatley mentioned that it was anticipated that there would be approximately £485m available for infrastructure under the GNDP process, including approximately £245m provided by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The bulk of this sum would be administered by Norfolk County Council – and therefore used to fund the major/large schemes - but there would be 5% for all the parish councils, so some small schemes would be able to benefit from this 5% of the CIL.

Christopher Kemp said that implementation of the CIL was unlikely to occur until 2014/2015.

Garry Wheatley also mentioned that Central Government was proposing changes to the way business rates were administered and collected – so by encouraging local businesses additional funding should be forthcoming.

PLANNING

RESULTS

1.(2011/1280) Mrs Jill Margaillan proposed conversion of single storey barn, at Elm Farm, School Lane, to 3 bedroom dwelling and new garage. This was approved with 16 conditions.

PARISH COUNCIL VIEWS (CONFIRMATION)

1.(2011/1543) Mr & Mrs E Cheong proposing a variation of condition 2 of planning permission 2011/0023/H to revise approved plans. The Parish Council's response had been "no views or comments".

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED TO THE NORTH OF HETHERSETT

The email, dated 26 September, sent by John Heaser on behalf of the Parish Council (all Parish Councillors received a copy of the agreed response) to Mr G Hancox at South Norfolk Council was confirmed. This pointed out – in relation to the Scoping Report proposing 1196 new dwellings etc. to the north of Hethersett – that the main concern of Little Melton Parish Council is the traffic predictions/implications, taking account of both the construction and long term traffic impact for our village.

Turning to making Charles Campion, (John Thompson & Partners) who are acting on behalf of Hethersett Land Ltd/the Ptarmigan Group, aware of the Parish Council's concerns it was unanimously agreed that the Parish Council would formally stress to Mr Campion that the following were the principal concerns for Little Melton:-

- Traffic implications – especially for Little Melton – resulting from the additional housing and changes to the road systems.
- An off road cycle path should be provided all the way from Hethersett, via Little Melton, to the NRP, and also connect to the UEA cycle path.

- An off road cycle path to enable school children to cycle safely from Little Melton to Hethersett.
- The dropping, from the 2011 plans, of an enlarged Doctors surgery.

LDF - SITES SUGGESTED FOR DEVELOPMENT IN LITTLE MELTON

It was emphasised that the LDF consultation period ran up to 18 November 2011, and therefore the Parish Council – taking into account the (new) sites recently put forward as possible for development – now needed to discuss and resolve whether it remained of the same opinion as it did in late 2010 (sites 619a and 619b were the then preferred sites) or if it wished to amend this view. It was thought that the total area of sites 619a and 619b, between Ringwood Close and the Great Melton Road, was just under two hectares.

Invited to speak Philip Wilson, Orchard House, Great Melton Road, spoke and confirmed what he had said in recent emails to the PC: that was that he considered other possible sites in the village more suitable for development and did not want to see more trees (just beyond the rear of his property) cut down to facilitate development.

It was noted that these trees were not subject to a Tree Preservation Order but the Parish Council was sympathetic to Mr Wilson's concerns at the potential loss of several trees.

It remained understood that Little Melton would probably get approximately 25/30 new properties over the period to 2026 – although it was noted that the still unresolved re-allocation (by SNC) of the originally envisaged Mangreen village – approximately 1,800 new houses – remained. Hence it was possible – probably likely - that Little Melton would be allocated a few of these.

Discussion then turned to the possible development of plot 1072 (recently offered for development) which was land totalling roughly 6.5 hectares on and around Elm Farm, School Lane.

Allowable density of new developments was difficult to predict – maybe between 20 – 30 per hectare – and it was noted that District Councils would be able to decide on the “appropriate” density.

Taking account of the large area of site 1072, now offered (although it was appreciated that not all approximately six and a half hectares would necessarily be advocated for development) it was, over all, not considered suitable for the level of development envisaged for the village.

Indeed the potential level of development likely for this site would very likely significantly exceed what parishioners had indicated as acceptable and this number could be increased if SNC said that this site – and the already proposed 619a and 619b – were both suitable for housing development. Furthermore there were envisaged implications/possible problems with access – although this would not necessarily have to be solely virtually directly opposite the local school.

Chris Starr, was however, of the opinion that the PC should put forward site 1072 for development, including the provision of community facilities – especially for older children/youths.

John Heaser advocated that the Parish Council should “pitch” for 30 new houses, as a maximum, and proposed that – as in late 2010 – the Parish Council confirm that the land between Ringwood Close and Great Melton Road be put forward for new housing.

Concluding, taking into consideration Mr Wilson's points, and on a proposal by Jan Kitchener, seconded by Jo Runeckles, the Parish Council agreed – with Chris Starr remaining of the opinion that site 1072 was better for development – to respond to SNC that, on the basis that it is understood that 20 new houses per hectare is an approximate guide, site 619a would be suitable for the scale of development put forward by the Parish Council – i.e. taking into account that the approximate area of this site was 1.6 hectares it should be sufficient for the level of new housing parishioners thought appropriate and which the PC would accept.

It was confirmed that it will be 2012 before specific sites are determined by SNC.

PARISH AMENITIES

FOOTBALL PITCH – TOP GOALMOUTH

It was noted that the recent top goalmouth repair seemed to be standing up quite well to the current level of use but that, with the wetter and harsher weather on the way, this needed to be monitored and if thought necessary sand brushed in to assist with the retention of a reasonable surface.

PLAY EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE/ANNUAL SAFETY INSPECTION 2011

It was confirmed following the Annual Safety Inspection – undertaken by Digley Associates on 1 September – and subsequently received report, which drew attention to a number of relatively minor matters requiring attention, that it was anticipated remedial work on these would be undertaken on Saturday 29 October, when the local litter pick would also be undertaken.

In addition it was noted that following discussions with CGM – by the Chair – that the problem of damage to the bottom of timber support posts in the play area would best be solved by the

contractors applying weed killer to a small area around each post so that maintenance equipment did not need to cut quite so close to the post.

PROPOSED NEW ALLOTMENT PROVISION (ADJOINING VPF)

Jan Kitchener reported that it appeared some plots/sites had recently been marked out.

The question of where a water supply would be obtained from was still to be determined.

No formal communication had taken place as yet and in consequence John Heaser, as Chair of the Parish Council, said that he and Chris Doggett (Chair of the Parochial Charity) needed to meet with the new Farm Manager in the near future.

VILLAGE PLAYING FIELD MAINTENANCE

It was confirmed that CGM Norwich had been authorized to prune the bushes etc in the small garden area – between the Village Hall and the tennis court – at a cost of £80.00 plus VAT, and that the work was expected to be undertaken towards the end of the month or in early November.

VILLAGE SIGN MAINTENANCE

It was agreed that clear or light Oak preservative would be best to apply to the new timber as this would show off the grain better.

The Parish Council also approved the purchase of (a) a kiln dried replacement Oak post, by John Symonds, at a cost of £165.00 net, and (b) a replacement horizontal air dried European Oak name sign/slat, carving (£60.00) and application of preservative, by Leslie Crowe, at a cost of £180.00 net.

SECTION 106 MONEY – RECEIPT/USE

It was confirmed that the Parish Council had received, from SNC, – in late March - the sum of £4,798.42 in interest.

As it was not exactly clear what had happened to the capital sum District Councillor, Garry Wheatley, kindly agreed to make enquiries at SNC and ascertain precisely what this had been used to provide.

Some potential expenditure, of the Parish Council, which the £4,798.42, could be used to defray included:-

- Village sign renovation,
- Unexpected maintenance,
- Access to VPF from envisaged new allotments/car park,
- New mains water supply to envisaged allotments,
- Replacement VH doors,
- Solar panels on the VH,
- Zip wire for older children etc.

Upon the suggestion of the Chair it was agreed that consideration of the use of this unexpected receipt needed to be looked into and recorded so that it was clear where this funding had been expended.

VILLAGE HALL REPLACEMENT WINDOWS AND DOORS

Following the fitting of the new front entrance doors, at the end of August, it was reported that the doors had been damaged, particularly in the bottom area – possibly by vandalism or possibly as a result of an attempted break in.

In consequence quotations had been sought from both shortlisted contractors, the Police notified of the problem, and Came & Company (the Parish Council's insurers) informed of the situation and the potential remedial action.

It was noted that a Village Hall Management Committee/Community Trust meeting had been held on Monday 17 October, with Jan Kitchener and Chris Starr in their role as Trustees, in attendance.

It was noted that Richard Smith, as Chair of the Community Trust, still was strongly of the opinion that the replacement doors should again be timber.

The Clerk explained that Yeoman's quotation, of 4 October, was on the basis that the new doors would be installed into the existing frame, reusing existing glass and bottom two panels. The two new hardwood doors would include the fitting of an additional deadlock suited to the existing deadlock and a new flush bolt to the bottom of the door. The new doors would also have two new heavy duty door closers fitted to the inside of the doors.

It was also reported that Aviva Insurance – acting for Came & Company – had rung the Clerk earlier in the day and asked if a settlement sum of £2,073.20 (£1,936, the Yeoman quotation, plus VAT of £387.20 less the excess of £250.00) would be acceptable. The Parish Council appreciated that as Aviva had seen the quotes (Yeoman was the lowest) the settlement for replacement doors could hardly be otherwise, and agreed to accept Aviva's offer on that basis.

In the wider context John Heaser suggested that maybe now was an appropriate time for the Community Trust to become responsible for all of the Village Hall liabilities (apart from insurance), and therefore would be seeking a meeting, relating to the Community Trust taking over full maintenance responsibilities etc, in the near future.

With this in mind Chris Starr said, and it was agreed, that if this occurred the sum currently included in the Parish Council precept (£1,000) for Village Hall yearly maintenance would need to be re-allocated, perhaps via an annual grant, to the Community Trust.

HIGHWAYS

PROPOSED CYCLE PATH LINK

John Heaser confirmed that he had emailed SNC, on 26 September, stressing that the main concerns of the Parish Council (in respect of the proposed large development of housing etc to the north of Hethersett) were traffic predictions, taking account of both construction and long term traffic on Little Melton. These concerns had stressed the necessity for the provision of an off road cycle path all the way from Hethersett, via Little Melton, to the NRP.

It was agreed these concerns should also be conveyed to John Thompson & Partners (acting on behalf of the developers) and the Chair said he would do so within the next few days.

John Heaser added that he would soon be meeting with officers from Norfolk County Council Highways which would enable Little Melton to emphasise the need for the cycle path link.

REPORTING OF MAINTENANCE MATTERS

The Clerk said he would shortly be notifying the Norfolk County Council Highways of several matters requiring remedial action, including thorns/brambles and potholes along Braymeadow Lane, brambles on the eastern side of Green Lane. It was also noted that the rough area of pavement outside the local school had still to be repaired and this lack of action would be highlighted again.

HGVs/COMMERCIAL TRAFFIC TRAVELLING THROUGH VILLAGE.

The Chair said he had spoken to County Councillor Judith Virgo earlier in the evening and been informed:-

- UK Mail have managed to establish a depot at the Little Melton Business Park.
- Vehicles in excess of 7.5 tonnes should not use the northern end of Burnthouse Lane, as the southern section of Burnthouse Lane is the designated lorry route. It was noted that vehicles below the weight limit could travel through Little Melton.
- Ms Virgo had had it confirmed, by Gary Overland, NCC, that all local signage is correct.

COMPLIMENTARY SAMs PROJECT-PILOT SCHEME/PROPOSED 20 M.P.H. SPEED LIMIT

There was nothing further to report, from the previous Parish Council meeting, other than that Chris Starr had agreed to contact David Goodman – the Vice-Chair of Bawburgh Parish Council – who is an approved operator.

UPDATED TRAFFIC DATA

The continuing pursuit of the obtaining of recent data applying to traffic through Little Melton was noted, but the information from County Councillor Judith Virgo was that there was little chance of receiving such information.

CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk of the Council's correspondence, as at 12 October, given to all Parish Councillors was noted as were the late additions received including (1) an email from Saffron Housing Trust Ltd asking if a representative could attend a Parish Council meeting (early in the New Year) to speak about new affordable homes, (2) an email from a Norfolk County Council Transport Planner regarding the consultation in respect of the Norwich Area Cycle Network, and (3) an email from the Norfolk Constabulary informing all of a new way to contact your Police.

DISTRICT, COUNTY AND REGIONAL DOCUMENTS

There were no documents reported under this heading.

LOCALISM BILL AND CONSEQUENCES FOR PARISH COUNCIL RULES

John Heaser commenced by stressing that this Bill would have significant implications for parish councils.

District Councillor Christopher Kemp said that he had given a presentation (of approximately one hour) at Cringleford the previous evening and recommended that a similar event be held at Little Melton, possibly with invitations to other local parish councils.

It was agreed that the Clerk would pursue the possibility of setting up such a meeting, for parish councilors, in Little Melton Village Hall, with Dr. Kemp.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

The Clerk reported the receipt on 1 October of a letter with a considerable number of pages making up the schedules etc, from GNDP, which informed the Parish Council (as a consultee) that the GNDP will be publishing Preliminary Draft Charging Schedules for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk under the CIL Regulations 2011 (amended) and is inviting comments on these Schedules over a six week period from 3 October until 14 November.

It was noted the Central Government had also launched its own consultation on the proposals. The latest likely timescale for implementation was understood to be 2014/2015.

FINANCIAL

BILLS AND RECEIPTS

On a proposal by Tony Berry, which was seconded by Harold Kerslake, and agreed the under mentioned invoices were authorized for payment:-

Hethersett Parish Council-fee for councillor training at Hethersett 19/7/11(101124)	£	12.50
Mr R Sinclair-Clerk's remuneration 1/7-30/9/11(101135)	£	1,365.02
Mr R Sinclair-Expenses 1/7-30/9/11(101133)	£	37.75
Mr R Sinclair-refund of B/B (50%) 25/9-24/10/11(101134)	£	9.49
Digley Associates Ltd.-Annual Inspection of VPF play equipment (101127)	£	48.00
H.M.Revenue & Customs-Income Tax 1/7-30/9/11(101125)	£	341.26
Mr S Cable-refund cost of enamel paints (metal parts of village sign)(101128)	£	13.95
Gabrielle Evans- Lombe-VPF rent 2 years 12/10/09 to 11/10/11(101129)	£	0.10
CGM Norwich-VPF maintenance September 2011(101130)	£	199.80
LM Parochial Church Council-2 nd 50% annual grant, churchyard maintenance(101126)	£	650.00
Mr R Sinclair-refund of official telephone 811432 (101132)	£	54.78
Mr J Symonds-stain/preservative, VPF play equipment(101136)	£	277.44

One receipt was reported, by the Clerk, this being from SNC and was the 2nd 50% instalment of the parish precept for 2011/2012 and amounted to £9,783.50.

MONITORING REPORT

It was reported, by Chris Starr, that he had found all financial transactions were in order for the latest monitoring check.

INTERNAL VERIFICATION

It was reported that the Internal Verification – undertaken by Chris Starr – for the period mid March to mid June 2011 – had been satisfactorily completed.

ANNUAL AUDIT OF PARISH COUNCIL A/Cs: CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the annual external audit was confirmed by the Clerk, who added that no comments, from parishioners, had been received from the public display of the required notice.

FUTURE ROLE OF SMALL SCHOOLS IN NORFOLK

The “letter” received on 30 September, from Norfolk County Council Children’s Services, seeking views on the role and value of small schools to the community – in the light of proposed policy changes from Central Government - was noted.

It was not known whether this included Little Melton Primary School, which it was thought had approximately 86 pupils on roll, although it was understood that “small” meant schools with less than 100 pupils on roll.

At this stage the Parish Council declined to make any comments, pending the receipt of further information.

DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

The date of the next Parish Council meeting – the last for the current calendar year – was confirmed as being Tuesday 29 November 2011, commencing at 7.30 pm in the village hall.

It was appreciated that at this meeting the Parish Council would have to consider and determine what submission (to SNC) it should make for the parish precept for the financial year 2012/2013.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.10 pm.

Chair.....

Date.....

