

LITTLE MELTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
at the VILLAGE HALL, MILL ROAD, LITTLE MELTON
TUESDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2012

PRESENT

John Heaser (Chair), Chris Starr (Vice-Chair), Tony Berry, Harold Kerslake.
Also present were District Councillors, Dr Christopher Kemp and Garry Wheatley and County Councillor Judith Virgo.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Tony Berry, Jan Kitchener, Jo Runeckles and Sally Sandford.

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 10 January 2012 were – on a proposal by Chris Starr, which was seconded by Harold Kerslake - 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

There were no matters raised under this item.

PLANNING

PARISH COUNCIL VIEWS/COMMENTS SOUGHT.

The Clerk drew attention to the copy of a planning application received 13 February, namely No 2012/0229 dated 6 February, submitted in the name of Ben Kemp c/o Agent/Location – Villa Farm, Watton Road, Bawburgh/proposing concrete hard standing to allow external storage for potential occupiers of adjacent approved employment units.

Considerable discussion took place on this proposal, and it was noted that (a) there had been a lot of plant on site during the 13 February, and (b) Garry Wheatley read an extract from the Inspector's 2010 report which indicated that there should be no external storage.

The overall view agreed was that the Parish Council should reaffirm the Inspector's view reached in 2010 and that John Heaser would draft a suitable response, on that basis, for circulation to all Parish Councillors prior to responding to SNC.

PARISH COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION (CONFIRMATION)

It was confirmed that no result had been received, from SNC, in respect of application (2011/1804) - Hethersett Land Ltd & Landowners – proposed residential mix use development of 1196 dwellings etc on land north of Hethersett village centre, including extension to Thickthorn Park and Ride. It was thought that the result would not be known until March 2012 at the earliest.

GNDP - HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED TO THE NORTH OF HETHERSETT

It was appreciated that there was nothing further to report other than it being noted that (a) existing policy precluded closing the gaps between villages and (b) that the recently submitted planning application (as above) had been submitted prematurely.

LDF – SITES SUGGESTED FOR DEVELOPMENT IN LITTLE MELTON

The Parish Council was unaware of any further progress other than (1) the receipt of an email, dated 3 December, informing the Parish Council of an additional site being put forward for consideration (north east of Gibbs Close) and (2) an enquiry being made, by John Long of Bidwells, representing Mr Paul Timewell, who was interested in looking at preparing a planning application for residential development on land owned by Mr Timewell off Gibbs Close (north/north east of Gibbs Close).

It was agreed that the response of the Parish Council to both these proposals should be that, as submitted to the LDF in November 2011, i.e. "site 619a will be suitable for the maximum of 30 (new) houses that LM considers acceptable"

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY REGULATIONS 2010 (AS AMENDED) – CONSULTATION

The Clerk confirmed (circulated to all Parish Councillors on 3 February) the receipt of the 92 page Draft Charging Schedule etc from the GNDP Partnership Manager, representations/ comments on which had to be made to GNDP by 5 March.

Whilst noting that the levy per new household is proposed to be substantially reduced the Parish Council declined to make any comments on these proposals.

SOUTH NORFOLK LDF – DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES – FIRST REGULATION 25 CONSULTATION

The receipt, on 26 January, of a covering letter, from Tim Horspole, Planning and Housing Policy Manager, SNC, and 59 page consultation document was confirmed. This consultation – according to SNC – “is about how SNC should customise the policies in the new National Planning Policy Framework and the Joint Core Strategy to reflect the pattern of life and development wanted for South Norfolk”.

Harold Kerslake had represented the Parish Council at an information and discussion session for Parish and Town Councils at SNC on Thursday 2 February, at which some 40 councillors had attended. This consultation, including forty questions (the information and discussion session had attempted to suggest how to respond to about 10 of these), was the first consultation in the process and it was noted that a second round of consultation will take place in the summer of 2012.

It was appreciated that there are issues with SNC having a 5 year supply of land suitable for development which makes it difficult for the LPA to oppose some development proposals. Two of the key proposals are (a) the preparation of a Local Development Plan, which must aim to achieve the objective of sustainable development, and (b) legislating the requirement for a “plan led” approach to the determination of all planning applications.

PARISH AMENITIES

FOOTBALL PITCH

Chris Starr reported that he and Jan Kitchener had recently applied a significant amount of sand to the top goalmouth and this appeared to be doing some good as the grass was already beginning to grow through the sand.

The Chair thanked Jan and Chris for their much valued work in transporting the sand and applying it over the goal area.

The HAFC hirings for the football pitch – for February – were noted.

PLAY EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE – REMEDIAL ACTION FROM ANNUAL SAFETY INSPECTION 2011

There was no further action to report for the moment although it was noted that the Spring Litter Pick was to take place on Saturday 24 March and that if there were enough volunteers on the day some basic maintenance work would be undertaken to the play equipment.

PROPOSED NEW ALLOTMENT PROVISION

It was reported that some progress was being made with the proposed creation of a new vehicular access nearly opposite the local church now agreed. This will have the added benefit of being able to create a shorter, and therefore less expensive, length for the mains water supply which would spur off the church.

VILLAGE PLAYING FIELD MAINTENANCE 2012

The Clerk reported that following an invitation letter to eight contractors seeking quotations for playing field maintenance for the season 2012 he had received three quotations for the Parish Council to consider.

These were from Norse £1,570 plus VAT, The Garden Guardian £1,497 plus VAT and CGM Norwich £1,478.60 plus VAT.

Taking account that CGM was the lowest quotation received and that the Parish Council had found their service to be very good over the last few years – when they had undertaken the village playing field maintenance – it was agreed, on a proposal by Chris Starr which was seconded by Harold Kerslake, that the Parish Council would accept the CGM quotation of £1,478.20.

Furthermore the Parish Council unanimously agreed to accept the CGM offer of a 3 year contract, with the price being held at £1,478.20 over the 3 year period of 2012-2014, i.e. a total

sum of £4,435.80.

The Clerk of the Council was therefore instructed to formally accept the CGM offer.

VILLAGE SIGN – MAINTENANCE/REFURBISHMENT

It was confirmed that John Symonds, together with Derek Sutton and his equipment, had completed the removal of the old base, sub base and post. John Symonds had recently constructed the new base in brick, tile and cobbles, setting within this the new seasoned oak support post.

Stewart Cable – having completely re-painted the heavy metal upper part of the sign and fitted the horizontal new oak name part of the sign etc – anticipated, together with Derek Sutton who would provide the lifting equipment, raising and fitting the upper part of the sign in place in the next week or so.

Once the whole “new” sign was back in place it was agreed that the Clerk would formally thank Stewart Cable, John Symonds, Derek Sutton and Wilf Chamberlain for all their excellent voluntary work in the refurbishment/replacement of the village sign.

SECTION 106 MONEY

There was no progress to report on the Parish Council’s use of the receipt of £4,798.42 (from SNC) although it was appreciated that a number of potential projects could use some or all of this sum and that following the end of the current financial year, any such use would need to be formally recorded, including for external audit purposes.

VILLAGE HALL – RESPONSIBILITIES/REPLACEMENT DOORS UPDATE

It was reported by Chris Starr that, after giving the matter further thought, the Community Trust did not wish to proceed with the transfer of all responsibilities (both internal and external) excluding insurance from the Parish Council to the Community Trust.

It was therefore thought that the £1,000 that the Parish Council was setting aside each financial year for longer term external maintenance expenditure would continue to be set aside by the Parish Council, although it was also understood that the Community Trust would be willing to make a contribution (to the Parish Council) towards such expenditure, should it be necessary. In conclusion John Heaser said he would produce a revised draft agreement document, for the two parties, as a formal agreement was definitely necessary to avoid confusion over the responsibilities and implications in the event of a problem, which could be presented to the Community Trust.

With regard to the replacement of the damaged front entrance doors it was confirmed that this had recently taken place (by the original contractors Yeomans) and that the Parish Council was now awaiting the receipt of the invoice so that this could be processed and paid by the Parish Council.

Finally it was noted that a new litter bin - to be funded by the Community Trust – to be hung on the steel chain link fencing to the tennis court, had been ordered by the Clerk on 25 January.

HIGHWAYS

PROPOSED CYCLE PATH LINK FROM LITTLE MELTON TO HETHERSETT

John Heaser said that he had no further progress to report other than the receipt of the email dated 3 February from Emma Kinsey, Transport Planner, Norfolk County Council, which informed the Parish Council that the Norwich Area Cycle Network had been adopted, on 18 January, as part of the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy Implementation Plan (NATS IP) and that there will be a focus on County Council future investment on developing the cycle network to improve facilities for cyclists.

REPORTING OF MAINTENANCE MATTERS

The Clerk confirmed the email of 24 January, from Norfolk County Council, which said that (a) the clearing of the carriageway of vegetation at the eastern end of the cul de sac section of School Lane, (b) the hedge trimming and clearing of the highway of vegetation on Green Lane, and (c) hedge trimming on Braymeadow Lane would shortly be attended to.

The Clerk next confirmed the email of 3 February, received from Norfolk County Council, informing the Parish Council that the Highway Rangers were to visit the village shortly and asking if the PC had any maintenance items that needed reporting.

To date the under mentioned had been identified as requiring attention:-

- clearance of vegetation in and around the drains at the bottom (N/E end of School Lane) so the drains operate efficiently
- clearing of brambles from the School Lane road name sign at the junction of School Lane

and Green Lane, and

- clearance of mud, leaves etc. near and around the gully on Burnthouse Lane just short of the junction with the Little Melton Road.

In addition – following John Heaser consulting the local school – an email, and photograph, had been sent to Mr Martin Kemp of Thickthorn Farm requesting that he arranges for the badly overgrown and encroaching (onto the public highway) brambles growing over the metalled footway, immediately adjacent to the school, be cut well back so that these are not a danger to pedestrians and the school children in particular.

HGVs/COMMERCIAL VEHICLE TRAFFIC TRAVELLING THROUGH LITTLE MELTON

Discussion began by the reporting of recent emails received from parishioners (Sheila Preston, Alexandra Mabbutt, David Holt, Andrew Parrott, Ruth Brennan, Gordon Shaw and David Buck) concerning commercial traffic travelling through the village.

Discussion was concluded by Chris Starr and Jan Kitchener agreeing to respond to these emails by explaining what action the Parish Council was to undertake in the near future including a survey in late March/April and setting out the issues and a plan of campaign .

COMPLIMENTARY SAMS PROJECT – PILOT SCHEME

There was nothing further to report on this matter.

PROPOSED 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT

There was nothing further to report on this matter.

VARIOUS

1. It was noted that – following enquiries – it had been established that the Village Inn no longer displayed “In” and “Out” signage to help vehicular traffic entering and leaving the premises car park. The reason given being liability arising from health and safety regulations.
2. The Clerk reported that he had recently requested that the grit bin at the Braymeadow Lane/School Lane junction be re-filled.
3. In response to the email on 28 December from Nigel Bailey at SNC, in respect of Community Transport, it was noted that the PC was still awaiting a reply to its email of 31 December saying it would like to talk to the NCTA about how the Flexibus can be made available to LM residents and how it can be publicised to them.

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS – ANNUAL WISH LIST TO NCC (FUNDING IMPLICATIONS)

The Clerk confirmed that following receipt of the letter from NCC Highways seeking bids for limited highways improvements the Parish Council had responded to the County Council on 20 January. The bid was for a Vehicle Activated Sign to be located on School Lane, just in advance of the local school.

It was noted that Norfolk County Council will only (part) fund the (possible) installation of one VAS only and that the proportion of the cost that the Parish Council will be expected to bear – if the bid is successful – would likely be between £2,500 and £4,000 depending on the connection to the electricity supply.

The Clerk added that it would be March before the Parish Council would be informed, by NCC, whether this bid has been successful.

CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk of the Council's schedule of correspondence, as at 7 February, given to all Parish Councillors, was noted as was the receipt, by Harold Kerslake, of ten packs of Winter Warmers from SNC. Harold asked if anyone had ideas on who might need one of these to let him know.

DISTRICT, COUNCIL AND REGIONAL DOCUMENTS

There were no documents reported under this heading.

However District Councillor Christopher Kemp recommended that the Clerk contact the SNC Monitoring Officer and ask (with the abolition of the Standards Board on 31 March 2012) if a revised Code of Conduct is to be issued to parish councils and secondly if it was correct that SNC will need to be informed of any changes to information on the Declarations of Interest forms, within 28 days of a change.

LOCALISM BILL AND CONSEQUENCES FOR PARISH COUNCIL RULES

There was no further discussion on this item.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) - PARISH PLAN/ INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES

There was nothing further reported on this item although it was appreciated that the level of anticipated funding, from this source, available to parish councils was continuing to diminish.

FINANCIAL

BILLS AND RECEIPTS

On a proposal by Harold Kerslake which was seconded by Chris Starr, and agreed, the undermentioned invoices were authorised for payment:-

Mr R Sinclair-refund of 1&1 Basic fee internet domain 31/12/11-31/12/12(101154)	£ 35.86
Mr R Sinclair-refund B/B (50%) 25/1-24/2/12 (101156)	£ 9.49
Mr R Sinclair-refund official telephone 811432 14/1-13/4/12(101158)	£ 58.74
Mr R Sinclair-refund 1&1 Additional domain 27/01/12-27/01/14(101159)	£ 7.18
Abate Limited-Mole eradication service 16/01-15/04/12(101155)	£ 118.80
Mr K J Symonds-Cost of materials for construction of village sign base etc (101157)	£ 303.23

Two receipts were reported, both from HAFC, for (a) two youth matches (Boys U14s) on 4th and 11th December amounting to £32.00 and (b) for three youth matches (1 x Boys U14s and 2 x Boys u15s) on 8th, 15th and 29th January 2012 amounting to £48.00.

MONITORING REPORT

Chris Starr said that all financial transactions had been found to be in order for the latest monitoring check he had undertaken.

UPDATED PARISH/COMMUNITY PLAN

The Chair confirmed that it was necessary – in the light of the provisions of the Localism Act and the forthcoming National Framework on Planning – to revise the current Parish Plan, which had been published in 2006. Amongst issues, stemming from the updated/revised local plan, via local input, would be the future development envisaged for Little Melton.

Local views have been sought, and will continue to be sought, including at the Annual Parish Meeting on 13 March.

DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

The date of the next Parish Council meeting was confirmed as being 3 April beginning at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

In addition the date of the Annual Parish Meeting (open to all parishioners to vote on motions – which were not binding on the Parish Council) was confirmed as being Tuesday 13 March 2012. It was again stressed that this meeting would not be a Parish Council meeting, although it was normal practice for Parish Councillors to be in attendance.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 9.30pm.

Chair.....

Date.....