

LITTLE MELTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
at the VILLAGE HALL, MILL ROAD, LITTLE MELTON
TUESDAY 3 APRIL 2012

PRESENT

John Heaser (Chair), Chris Starr (Vice-Chair), Tony Berry, Harold Kerslake, Jan Kitchener and Jo Runeckles.

Also present were County Councillor Judith Virgo and District Councillors, Dr Christopher Kemp and Garry Wheatley.

In addition five members of the public were present, namely Anne Evans, Ian Grady, Peter Graves, Sheila Preston and Phil Wilson.

APOLOGIES

No apologies were submitted.

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 14 February 2012 were – on a proposal by Tony Berry, 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

PRESENTATION BY Mr I GRADY

Invited to speak by the Chair Mr Grady, together with Peter Graves (who works for Lovell Partnerships Limited), circulated a couple of copies of a draft layout plan and spoke on the housing development they were proposing on land at the end of Ringwood Close (to the south) through to Great Melton Road. The Parish Council's views were being sought in advance of the submission of a planning application to South Norfolk Council.

It was noted that this land was not currently inside the development boundary of Little Melton but that the Parish Council has suggested, to the District Council, that part of this land is suitable for the level of housing (maximum of 30 new dwellings) that is expected to be allocated under the GNDP process.

A circulated plan showed 35 proposed dwellings (houses and bungalows) with no through road onto Great Melton Road, although a (proposed) footpath would facilitate pedestrian access onto that road.

The PC noted that 26 of the dwellings as currently proposed were shown as either 4 or 3 bedroomed properties but felt that there should be a greater emphasis on providing dwellings with less bedrooms.

In conclusion the overall feeling of the Parish Council was that (a) there should be more 2 bedroomed bungalows (with smallish gardens) for the elderly – and less large properties – and (b) no building in the south/east corner of the land shown for this development.

It was further noted that the south/eastern part of the proposed site was not owned by Mr Grady. Finally Mr Grady and Mr Graves said that they would shortly be holding a consultation event in the Village Hall which would take the form of a "Drop In" event at which parishioners etc would be able to ask questions about the proposals and concerns and suggestions would be noted.

PARISH COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION UPDATE

2011/1804 - Hethersett Land Ltd & Landowners proposed residential mixed use development of 1196 dwellings etc on land north of Hethersett Village Centre, including extension to Thickthorn Park & Ride.

As far as is known this application had yet to be determined.

2012/0255 – Mr I Plummer proposing removal of existing Leylandi dying hedge and replacement with standard 1.65 metre high timber vertical board panels to 2 Gibbs Close.

The Parish Council had not expressed any views or comments on this proposal.

RESULT

2012/2009 – Gable Developments Ltd proposing concrete hard standing to allow external storage for potential occupiers of adjacent approved employment units at Villa Farm, Watton Road, Bawburgh.

Although official notification of this result had yet to be received from SNC, it was reported that the LPA had – on 21 March – refused this proposal.

PARISH COUNCIL VIEWS/COMMENTS SOUGHT.

2012/0500 – Norwich Research Park (NRP) proposing Scoping Opinion for new offices and ancillary uses with associated parking, access roads, landscaping and cycle parking at Norwich Research Park North, Colney Lane, Colney, Norfolk.

This is a major development – with a likely construction period of 15 years – and 2,800 new jobs being created within NRPN.

It was understood that anticipated timescales were (A) promotional “Drop In” sessions in late April, (B) submission of Outline Planning Application in June, (C) Detailed Planning Application submission June to September and (D) a start on construction in January 2013.

The very substantial concerns for LM Parish Council are the resultant extremely high/heavy vehicular traffic implications and that safe cycle paths are provided.

With these factors in mind it was agreed that the Chair would draft a suitable response to SNC, and circulate this to all of the Parish Councillors, so that the Parish Council is in agreement with the formal detailed response, within the requested timescale.

GNDP - HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED TO THE NORTH OF HETHERSETT

It was reported that no further information was known at this stage.

LDF – SITES SUGGESTED FOR DEVELOPMENT IN LITTLE MELTON

No further information had been received but a report in the Eastern Evening News of 28 March said that the proposed allocation of sites (for Little Melton) – as proposed by SNC – should be known in April or possibly May 2012.

It was also reported that the Chair and the Clerk had met, on 15 February, with Paul Timewell (landowner) and John Long (Senior Planning Associate, Bidwells) in an informal capacity to talk about the possible development of land to the north/east of the existing affordable housing off Gibbs Close. It was understood that Timewell was looking to develop part of the site only – maybe 20/30 new properties – with an element of affordable/social housing.

It was suggested by John Long that this could be part of SNC’s 1,800 “floating” new housing originally envisaged for Mangreen but this was unknown at present.

John Heaser had reported the Parish Council’s position, i.e. that it had already informed SNC of the recommended site for development (south of the existing Ringwood Close to the Great Melton Road).

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY REGULATIONS 2010 (AS AMENDED) – CONSULTATION

It was reported that there was nothing further to report.

PARISH AMENITIES

FOOTBALL PITCH

It was reported that the top goalmouth still appeared to be in reasonable condition, with the sand applied at an earlier date still in evidence.

The anticipated bookings by HAFC were noted.

PLAY EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

Tony Berry reported that he had – from time to time – made a visual inspection and the Chair asked if he would in future record these inspections via email so that this action was formally recorded. Tony therefore agreed to do so.

PROPOSED NEW ALLOTMENT PROVISION

Other than it being reported that a draft agreement was being drawn up for presentation to Sir Edward Evans-Lomb there was nothing further to report on this item.

VPF CONTRACT MAINTENANCE 2012

The Clerk reported the receipt of an email on 19 March from CGM asking the Parish Council to sign up to a 6 page contract. Having read the proposed contract the Clerk had emailed a

response to CGM, on 21 March, and asked for clarification of 9 points – but to date a response from CGM had yet to be received.

In the meantime the Clerk would seek clarification – via the NALCs – of whether it was acceptable, in local government law, for the Parish Council to accept a contract over 3 years with the price being held (except for inflation) at £1,478.60 plus VAT. If this was acceptable this would obviously preclude the need for the contract to go out to tender for seasons 2013 and 2014.

VILLAGE SIGN

The recent completion, including re-erection, was confirmed, as was the formal thanking of the work undertaken by Stewart Cable, John Symonds, Derek Sutton and Wilf Chamberlain.

The only remaining matter was the re-fixing of the existing brass plaque on the main support post – which John Heaser would undertake – and the addition of a new plaque of similar size with new wording. It was agreed that John would also look into this and circulate all Parish Councillors with a suggested form of appropriate wording.

SECTION 106 MONEY

With the passing of the end of the financial year the Clerk suggested that it was now an appropriate time to determine how the receipt of £4,798.42, from SNC, should be utilized. With the cost of the VAS (50%) anticipated to be up to £4,000 and the costs of refurbishing the village sign i.r.o. £700 it was agreed that the Section 106 receipt should be earmarked for this expenditure, especially as such costs had not been included in the parish precept.

VILLAGE HALL RESPONSIBILITIES

Although it was appreciated that the Community Trust did not want a formalized agreement to be drawn up – but the Parish Council did – it was still considered that some form of written recorded agreement (such as a service level agreement) should be drawn up.

The Parish Council's thinking was that both parties needed to be exactly aware of their responsibilities, especially taking into consideration that the membership of both the CT and PC would change over a period of time.

In consequence it was agreed that as a first step John Heaser and Chris Starr would write down the perceived responsibilities of both parties.

The Clerk added that he had received an email dated 29 March from Richard Smith, Chair of the CT, asking - in the light of Yeoman fitting different locks to the replaced front entrance doors - how this matter should be rectified.

In view of the CT taking all responsibility for the recently repaired/replaced front entrance doors the Clerk reported that that he had responded, to Richard Smith, in an email of 30 March that this was a matter for the CT to resolve – presumably F.O.C. – with Yeoman, as presumably the CT would have stipulated the key/lock requirements.

MISCELLANEOUS

- 1) It was noted that a litter bin to be erected on/near the tennis court fencing – entirely funded by the Community Trust – had been received by Jean Chamberlain, but without the backing plate!
Hence the Clerk had emailed the suppliers again and received a response on 14 March that this omission would be looked into.
- 2) The Clerk reported that Eunice Tan, 20 Greenacres, had asked if she could hire a small part of the VPF for a children's party, on either Saturday 28 April or Saturday 12 May. After consulting the Chair the Clerk had informed Eunice Tan that her request was acceptable – subject to some conditions, including her taking responsibility for all insurance implications. The grassed area to be used would be between the top goal of the football pitch and the Village Hall and the cost of this hiring would be £5.00.
It was noted that Eunice Tan would notify the Clerk – in advance – on which of these two dates the party would take place.
- 3) Chris Starr mentioned that a tree, donated by Sir Edward Evans-Lomb, was to be planted on the village playing field and that he and Keith Woods would be sorting the details such as location etc.

HIGHWAYS

PROPOSED CYCLE PATH LINK FROM LITTLE MELTON TO HETHERSETT

John Heaser said that he had no further progress to report.

REPORTING OF MAINTENANCE MATTERS

The Clerk confirmed that the broken/rough area of concrete on the pavement immediately

outside the local school would likely be repaired during the Easter school holiday. It was also noted that maintenance had recently been undertaken to School Lane, Rectory Lane and Burnthouse Lane, and that the finger direction signs on the directional signpost at the Rectory Lane/Great Melton Road junction are to be replaced.

Lastly it was reported that Mr Martin Kemp of Thickthorn Farm had recently cut back the badly overgrown and encroaching (onto the public highway) brambles growing over the metalled footway, immediately adjacent to the school. Following this action Jan Kitchener and Chris Starr had very kindly cleaned up this area of the pavement by scraping off the accumulated soil etc so that full use of the width of this part of the public highway could be properly used.

HGVs/COMMERCIAL VEHICLE TRAFFIC TRAVELLING THROUGH LITTLE MELTON

Chris Starr spoke on this issue and said, he and Jan Kitchener, would be making arrangements for a 12 hour survey and would be looking for volunteers to participate.

Sheila Preston and Anne Evans said they would be willing to help.

John Heaser proposed that the PC should contact all the owners/occupiers of the Little Melton Business Park to request that their vehicle drivers adhere to the weight restriction limit (7.5 tonnes) applying in Little Melton and that those vehicles below the limit do not speed through our village. A subcommittee meeting is to be arranged.

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 issue.

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

The Clerk reported the excellent news - in an email dated 2 April from Paul Donnachie, Capital Programme Manager at County Hall - that the Parish Council's bid, to NCC, for a Vehicle Activated Sign, to be located on School Lane, just in advance of the local school, had been successful. It was stated that this provision would occur during 2012/2013 and that officers will be in touch with the Parish Council shortly regarding delivery of the scheme.

The estimated cost to the Parish Council would be £4,000, i.e. 50% of the total cost.

As it was not totally clear that the County Council would be entirely responsible for the ongoing maintenance and insurance implications County Councillor Judith Virgo kindly agreed to check this out and, providing it was ascertained that these were not the responsibility of the Parish Council, the signing of the necessary form (by the Chair and Vice-Chair) would then occur.

It was anticipated that the cost to the PC would be borne by the funding secured from the Section 106 receipt. Concluding John Heaser said that he would notify the Head Teacher, Joan Hughes, of the good news.

OVERGROWN HEDGING

It was confirmed that when Parish Councillors were delivering the April edition of the Parish Council's newsletter they were to make a note, including address, date etc of where hedges were encroaching over pavements. The details would then be entered – by each Parish Councillor – onto a database created by John Heaser. Following this action Jan Kitchener, as a first step, would then informally speak to the owner, and request that early action be taken.

Richard Sinclair added that when delivering his batch of newsletters he had had a friendly word with his near neighbour, Richard Hannant, as this was an instance of overgrown/encroaching hedging – and Mr Hannant had agreed to take appropriate action.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Following the PC's email of 31 December to Nigel Bailey at SNC, requesting a discussion with NCTA (Norfolk County Transport Association) on how the flexibus can be made available to Little Melton residents, the Clerk reported the email of 8 March from Norfolk County Council Travel & Transportation Services, which said it would be difficult to add Little Melton into the journeys of the flexibus scheme, and furthermore the village already has a good level of bus service.

MILL ROAD CALMING MEASURE

The Clerk reported his receipt on 2 April of an email from Richard Smith suggesting that it would be preferable if the priority direction for the traffic calming measure on Mill Road was reversed so that priority was from the VPF direction.

This matter has always been debatable, and following some discussion it was agreed that the Clerk would reply to Richard Smith that the PC would review the situation when the next VPF young children's play area working party is held. Richard Smith to be invited to attend on that

day to view with members of the PC.

CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk of the Council's lengthy schedule of correspondence, as at 28 March, plus late additions, given to all Parish Councillors, was noted. This included an email dated 21 February from SNC giving notice of the coming new Code of Conduct (new Standards regime) and a reminder about the members Declarations of Interest.

In addition the Clerk reported the recent theft – probably on 20 March – of a caravan from a property on School Lane.

DISTRICT, COUNCIL AND REGIONAL DOCUMENTS

There were no documents reported under this heading.

LOCALISM BILL AND CONSEQUENCES FOR PARISH COUNCIL RULES

There was no further discussion on this item other than it being noted that the Bill had been resubmitted and that it was likely to become effective w.e.f. 1st July.

It was noted that Parish Councillors – under these provisions – were individually responsible rather than the Clerk of the Parish Council.

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

There was nothing further reported on this item, for the present.

FINANCIAL

BILLS AND RECEIPTS

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

Yeoman Windows & Conservatories-replacement front doors to VH (101160)	£2,323.20
Mr R Sinclair-Clerk's remuneration 1/1-31/3/12 (101163)	£1,365.02
Mr R Sinclair-refund B/B (50%) 25/2-24/3/12 (101165)	£ 9.49
Mr R Sinclair-refund expenses 1/1-31/3/12 (101164)	£ 51.28
Sally Sandford-purchase of sand to apply to VPF top goalmouth (101161)	£ 49.20
SNC-Dog Bin Servicing Charge 2011/2012 (101166)	£ 277.20
NALCs-Annual subscription 2012/2013 (101167)	£ 163.20
LM Village Shop- printing April 2012 PC Newsletter (101168)	£ 21.25
CGM Norwich-VPF maintenance March 2012 (101169)	£ 221.80
H M Revenue & Customs-Income tax Clerk's salary 1/1-31/3/12 (101162)	£ 341.26

One receipt was reported, this being £16.00 from HAFC, for the hire of the VPF football pitch on Sunday 26 February for a Boys U15s youth match.

MONITORING REPORT

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

INTERNAL VERIFICATION

Chris Starr also reported the successful undertaking (with the Clerk) of the I.V. for the period mid-September to mid-December 2011.

UPDATED PARISH/COMMUNITY PLAN

Although it was felt that this would need to be updated District Councillor Christopher Kemp suggested that it would be best if LMPC did not pursue such action for the present – taking into account that Cringleford Parish Council (which was one of the first larger PCs to go through the process) has had to employ professional expertise at some cost to see that the whole process, including a referendum, was carried through properly and satisfactorily.

It was noted that the cost of a referendum – which could amount to several hundred pounds – would be borne by the Parish Council, and that such expenditure had not been allowed for in the parish precept for 2012/2013.

It was therefore agreed that this action would not be pursued for the present.

PARISH COUNCILLOR VACANCY

John Heaser and Richard Sinclair explained the process which was that the vacancy would be advertised on the local noticeboards etc – for two weeks (excluding weekends and bank

holidays) and then if SNC had not received a request from 10 electors to hold an election, an election would not be held. Once this had been determined the Parish Council could, by co-option, appoint someone to become a Parish Councillor and fill the vacancy created by the recent resignation of Sally Sandford. It was noted that this would occur early in the business of the Annual Parish Council meeting on 8 May.

DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

The date of the next Parish Council meeting was confirmed as being 8 May beginning at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. As this was the Annual Parish Council meeting the first item on the agenda would be the Election of the Chair of the Parish Council, for the ensuing year. There being no further business the meeting concluded at 9.45 pm.

Chair.....

Date.....