

# MEARS ASHBY PARISH COUNCIL

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## MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 10 IN THE VILLAGE HALL

**Present: Mrs K Payne, Mr A Watts, Mrs M Barker, Mrs C Napier, Mrs J Reid, Mrs L Ross (Clerk)  
Cllr J Bass**

**1. Apologies:** Mr E Potter and Mr A Payne

**2. Approval of absence:** Approved

**Mrs Payne read out a statement regarding a declaration of interest see attached copy.**

Cllr Bass complimented Mrs Payne on the professional manner in which this matter had been handled.

**3. Declarations of interest:** Mrs Payne and Mrs Napier to item 4

**4. Planning Applications:** Item no 4 was discussed at the end of the meeting see below

**5. Cllr Bailey's Discretionary Grant** – it was decided that an application should be made for funds to go towards the re-fencing of the Village Hall. One more estimate is required. Cllr Bass offered to speak to Cllr Bailey and to ensure the allocation of £1000.00 for Mears Ashby Parish Council. A formal application will be made once all the quotations have been received.

**Cllr Bass's Ward Support Grant** – a formal request is to be made for £290.00 from Cllr Bass's Ward Support Grant to go towards the re-fencing of the Village Hall.

**6. Position of planter in Vicarage Lane**

Mrs Payne is to contact Mrs Bellamy and Mr Chamberlain of the Mears Ashby Society regarding the positioning of the new planter on the Vicarage Lane corner.

**7. Matters of Concern**

**Proposed Footpath Diversion TT1/TN4** – There were no objections to this proposal, the Clerk is to notify Samuel Rose accordingly

**Public Realm Concept Design Consultation** – The Parish Council approve of the improvements suggested for Gloucester Place/ Market Street but would like to see the preservation of the historical buildings where possible to blend in with the street scene.

**Planning Training** – Crash Course on Planning System for Northamptonshire Parish Councils - Tuesday March 30<sup>th</sup>. Mrs Napier, Mrs Barker and Mr Payne have requested to attend.

**Village Enhancement** – Quotation received from Manor Landscapes – as this is a financial matter and it was received too late to go on the agenda it is to be discussed at the meeting on March 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mrs Payne and Mrs Napier left the meeting prior to the discussion regarding the planning application.

**4. Planning Applications:**

WP/2009/0510/F

Installation of a simple lighting system to new all weather paved runway  
Sywell Aerodrome, Wellingborough Road, Sywell, Sywell Aerodrome Ltd

It was felt that this application cannot be considered for the following reason:

The letter of the Secretary's of State original appeal enquiry report ref APP/H2835/A/05/1175766 to Kember Loudon Williams (KLW) clearly stated in Annex A – Planning Conditions item (13) that no passenger terminal or approach lights shall be erected.

Whilst it is suggested in the above planning application, Description of Proposal to Wellingborough Planning Services, from KLW (dated 11<sup>th</sup> December 2009) that the CAA's latest stipulation for this type of runway should be provided with a simple approach lighting system. It is noted that the applicant refers to the consequences of rejection and its impact upon the use of the runway. This condition was included for that very reason.

Therefore the Parish Council asked that the application be rejected for the reasons outlined, and also asked for confirmation of this from Wellingborough Council. Copies to be sent to James Wilson, Cllr Bass, Borough Council of Wellingborough and copies to the Secretary of State for Transport and Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

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**Sywell Aerodrome JCC** – Copy of letter received from Ecton Parish Council – this is to be added to the agenda for discussion at the meeting on March 1<sup>st</sup>

There being no further business the meeting closed.

Signature.....

Date.....

Mrs Kate Payne's statement to the Parish Council 1<sup>st</sup> February 2010

Following receipt of the draft Minutes of the last PC meeting, at which Cllr Bass was present, I received e-mails from him stating that he had noticed from those minutes that I had not declared an interest in the Sywell Aerodrome planning application and because Aubrey was an employee of the Aerodrome and my husband was recently employed by the Aerodrome and may again be so employed that I should have done so.

As a result of this correspondence I contacted Mr. Chris Pittman, the Monitoring Officer at WBC, as I felt this situation needed clarifying once and for all before I could respond adequately to Cllr. Bass.

I duly met with Mr. Pittman who, on receiving the full facts relating to Aubrey and Richard (i.e. Aubrey is not and as far as I am aware has never been employed by the Aerodrome and that Richard's period of employment was in 2008 from July until the end of October when the excavations and concreting of the hard runway took place) told me that Richard's period of employment at the Aerodrome was far enough in the past and his possible future employment at the aerodrome was something so remote that these were not material considerations.

Following considerable head scratching and consideration of the Code of Conduct, Mr. Pittman said that he felt I need only declare a Personal Interest. The reason for this is that Aubrey is my brother-in-law and he declares Personal and Prejudicial interests in Sywell Aerodrome Ltd.

At the same time, I enquired of Mr. Pittman what sort of interest, if any, Caroline Napier should make. He is of the opinion that she need only declare a personal interest because, as she is only Aubrey's niece the relationship is not close enough to require any other course of action. However, the choice is hers. All declarations of interest are entirely a matter for the conscience of the individual concerned.

My main concern in this whole matter is that Parish Council decisions should be above suspicion and therefore both Mr. Pittman and I agreed that it would be in the best interests of the Parish Council for me to take no part in any future discussions concerning the Aerodrome.

The reasons for this decision relate to the test for declarations of a prejudicial interest. As you are aware, personal interests arise if a matter affects the well-being or financial position of your family or people with whom you have a close association more than it would affect the majority of people in the ward or electoral division affected by the decision. The test for declarations of a prejudicial interest is that of reasonableness. i.e. whether a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the relevant facts would think that one's personal interest was so significant that it would prejudice and harm or impair one's ability to judge the public interest.

The controversial nature of all things to do with the Aerodrome and the entrenched position of both "pros" and "antis" means that "reasonableness" is in very short order and it is for that reason that I make the decision that I have.

I think that it would be very helpful in future if concerns are raised at the time although I appreciate that sometimes this is not always possible.

Signature.....

Date .....