

FENLAND AERO CLUB Committee

Fenland Airfield, Jekils Bank, Holbeach St Johns Spalding, PE12 8RQ

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FENLAND AERO CLUB COMMITTEE

Wednesday 22nd March 2023 18.00

Present:	Jeff Helm (JH), David Petters (DP), Steve Brown (SB), Colin Albone (CA), Dave Capon (DC), Kerry Goundry, Robin Hoile (RH), Rynardt Spies (RS)
Remote:	David Petters (DP), Graham Kiddy (GK)
Others in attendance:	Michelle Parrett (MP), minute taker (remote)

AGENDA OF THE SAFETY MEETING OF THE FENLAND AERO CLUB WEDNESDAY 22ND MARCH 2023

SB confirmed nothing to report that would not be covered under other substantive agenda items.

Referring back to the shooting party on the runway, SB asked if anyone had spoken to the organiser of the shooting party. JH confirmed he had a telephone number for the organiser of the shooting party which he would pass over to GK to contact. **Action JH**

AGENDA OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE FENLAND AERO CLUB WEDNESDAY 22ND MARCH 2023

2) Apologies

Braden Connolly
Oliver Wheeldon
Ziggy Krasa
Phil Parsons
Peter Begley

3) Minutes of previous meeting

SB raised incorrect spelling of Hangar which had been recorded as Hanger, and the incorrect surname for Roger Balcomb.

SB asked if the flying school would be compensated for loss of business if there was an Air race, the minutes say that DP didn't think this would be possible, SB presumes this is correct, but stated what DP actually said was no. DP said he thought he didn't think so but would need to look at it, he believes that the minutes reflect the conversation.

Minutes signed off as a true and accurate record.

4) Matters arising

a) Aerobatics questionnaire

JH has distributed the results to the Committee. SB highlighted that DP had previously said that when he reviewed the results there had been a positive trend towards aerobatics, however the results showed only 33% wanted more, meaning 66% did not want more. Whilst the results could be interpreted in different ways the overall response was members were happy to continue with two aerobatic events a year. JH went on to say there was a lot of information to be digested but the consensus was that members wished for things to stay as they were. Given the comments JH felt that some of the concerns raised may be alleviated if a briefing was provided in advance of the event.

CA queried as it was advertised on the webpage, did it constitute a display event. DP it is not a display as it doesn't happen on the airfield.

CA believed that chaos can be caused by the people who turn up for these events. JH confirmed there is a briefing in the morning of the event, usually someone from the Tower. JH advised historically it had been agreed a Committee member would be present at these events which again would help ensure the smooth running of these events as there would be a nominated contact. JH believes this should be brought back for this year as this would help with some concerns.

b) Aircraft hire response

BC had taken an action at the last meeting to write to the owner of an aircraft for hire. He firstly responded to say that he was happy to have a conversation but wanted the Committee to submit in writing all the concerns, with supporting evidence so he could prepare in advance.

DC believes the Committee has now discussed this and should provide him with a date and if he doesn't attend, we will be obliged to act accordingly with our rules and he would have to cease from the business, an ultimatum has to be given. JH believes it would be a simple issue to resolve with equity shares.

DP concurs, he has to comply with the rules and fall under the DTO licence and asks for differing views. All concur. DP pass the action back to BC to sort out as he is now the point of contact and ask for this to be sorted before the next meeting, ideally within 14 days. All concurred. **Action BC**

5) Club administration (Secretary)

a) New Members

JH confirmed seven new members: Paul Yardley, Heidi Barrett, Ollie Suckling, Carl Smith, Gavin Livsey, Andrew Gurry and Ian Moxon.

b) Membership renewals update

a. Phil Parsons social member

JH updated that Phil has renewed as a social member and no longer meets the criteria to be on the Committee. DC states that he understands this and by default has resigned from the Committee. He would have attended the meeting but has been admitted to hospital.

DP queried the rules say you need to be a full flying member for two consecutive years to be nominated to be on the Committee, does he need to stand down on this Committee or does it mean he cannot be nominated for the next. DC agreed it was a dilemma but doesn't think from a moral point of view you can be on the Committee if you are not a flying member. DC indicates a rule change might be required and this could be considered at the next AGM. DP agreed it was a loophole and reiterates the rules. DP states technically at the moment there is no need for a resignation, but the Committee agreed it would be difficult to justify to the members. Something to be considered and look to amend.

JH worth looking at the rules around this area.

b. Monthly membership

JH advised that during Covid one member had requested to pay monthly and given the exceptional circumstances at the time this had been agreed. JH has received an email indicating the member wished to continue this, which is against club rules due to admin costs and time.

The Committee agreed that the member should be sent one more email by JH reminding them of the fact this is against the rules and not permitted, and if it remains unchanged and it is not paid in full, they will be deemed by the Committee to have resigned and are a non-member. All were in favour of this. **Action JH**

CA queried whether we should update reciprocal when we do updates to the members, JH advised members get a list of reciprocals when they join but can see no harm in sharing on the renewal email. SB suggested DP also share in his next newsletter.

JH will discuss renewal rate of memberships at the next meeting.

c) Work Schedule items

The gas check remains outstanding, and there is an additional issue with the gas supply valve, and at the moment is on manual override, this needs to be sorted. RS agreed to take an action to find an appropriate commercial engineer. **Action RS**

6) Finance (Treasurer)

BC has issued a profit and loss page. JH advised that year to date the profits are currently £24k down, with rent included would be more like £35k, and this would be likely to be how the year was concluded. DP confirmed that this was in line with the budget that BC had issued earlier.

JH confirmed, excluding the money in the bank allocated to memberships for next year, there is £65k in the account, previous years had sat at about £100k. JH money has been spent appropriately on members etc, just need to be wary, especially when there is a requirement to order fuel. DP advised there was some overspill from the previous Committee making no spend at all on the airfield. The Committee requested that the £35k loss be broken down into sections so members could see this in more detail. SB also advised that he had an accountant who had offered his services free of charge, should BC require this. JH would ask BC to break down the £35k into sections and pass on the offer of assistance. **Action JH/BC**

7) Fuel (Fuel Manager)

Nothing to report. Fuel went down to 16p a litre last order. JH reported the fuel payment system was not working, SB confirmed a communication error, that he had rung Tokheim and had yet to receive a response from them. SB had tried to reset them, JH would take a look before he left tonight.

a. MOGAS

JH had been contacted by a member requesting if the club would be prepared to sell MOGAS because it is cheaper and replace UL 91, this was because he wished to support the club by buying fuel from the club. JH had contacted Cyma to see if they sell MOGAS and see the price difference. Discussion as to the benefits, and other concerns such as ethanol content. JH pointed out you can buy ethanol free MOGAS. Sales of UL 91 are at 10%, around 1000l a month.

DP requested JH to find out about the costs associated to do this along with the margin for profit, if favourable this could then be taken forward to the members at the AGM. JH is happy to fact find. **Action JH**

b. Tokheim upgrade/quotation/new computer

Tokheim contacted JH last week, the computer running the fuel payments will no longer be supported by the end of the year. We will have to provide a new computer and pay for their time to update it. JH not aware of costs involved as yet, just to make the Committee aware.

8) Safety matters

GK confirmed nothing to report.

SB raised issues with the location of the fire truck as he'd been unable to store it in the old hangar due to problems with the axel on the door. DP confirmed two people had looked at the door and been unable to fix this. CA stated Paul has offered to have a look at it and he has engineering skills. Committee would like Paul to look at this to see if a solution can be found. **Action CA**

SB requested the chipmunk people ask their people to make sure there is no aircraft overhang onto the fire truck parking space – DP confirmed this had already been done.

DP believed it makes sense to leave the fire truck under the flying school veranda and queried if it made sense to look at some form of car port/shipping container/lean to to get it airside. More thought to be given to this.

9) Airfield general (Airside/non airside Manager)

Airside

a) Mole man retired

The mole man has retired due to ill health, all traps around the airfield and in the hangars will be taken at the end of the month. The charge for this service had been £600 a year. The Committee did not feel a need to find a replacement service and would deal with pest issues as and when they occurred. BC had a pest control licence, and it would be brought back to the next meeting to discuss further. **Action JH**

DC advised nothing to report, other than DC and GK did try and do the numbers at 08 and DC and SB had flown over today, and the paint has washed away, despite using 35l of paint. The numbers painted on 26 with spray cans are still visible. DC advised he would try to use to chalk in the first instance to see if this had better lasting results.

DP advised Tim would start with the fuel area concrete, all was approved at the last Committee, just waiting for a date, this will mean the 91 side fuel pumps out of action for a couple of days.

Signage – OW and DP identified the signs which do not comply with CAP 168, DP will pop these on a diagram and send over to the sign writers to have these done.

DP thought an extra holding point opposite Alpha might be beneficial on the western side, might make it easier for the Tower personnel to direct people to the parking area. SB queried if the CAA recommended that and DP advised it was in the CAT 168 as an optional sign, something with more of a practical benefit.

DC requested that once the signs had been designed, could they be brought back to the Committee for approval prior to production, as he felt that this was something that needed Committee approval as committing club funds. DP was happy with this, reiterating the point that the current signs were not compliant, so it needed progressing. DP agreed Committee approval would be gained prior to any production. **Action DP**

Non airside

RS reported slippery decking outside the portacabin, DP suggested anti slip matting, RS would investigate further.

It was noted the potholes were looking slightly better.

10) Accountable Manager

OW not present but has raised concerns about the lack of fire cover. RS concerned the CAA might be getting more concerned about the lack of fire cover.

11) IER/RFFS (IER Manager)

a) Volunteer memberships

JH advised the CAA will revisit around March/April and there is a need now to sort the situation. DP Reiterated this is a requirement of the licence for the airfield and there is a real risk of losing the licence. SB is it now worth considering paying somebody.

CA spoke to the duty manager down at Holbeach, he was going to ask. Not heard back as yet but will make contact before the next meeting. **Action CA**

RS suggested putting an advertisement banner on the screen, as there are no signs around the airfield to try and entice cover. JH have had recruitment drives previously; it is retaining the volunteers that proves difficult. DP indicated that if this situation continues there will be a need to look at a duty system which involves all members, acknowledging then that there is a cost/training implication. Not sure how it would work, could be on a rotating basis, there needs an initiative if we can't get volunteers. This is in the members interest as the licence would be lost. RS indicating that the time commitment of a whole day causes issues and

suggested a shorter time shift than a whole day might be more of an incentive. DP queried if this was worth a survey to the members to find out what stops people volunteering. DP will be highlighting in the newsletter the importance and pointing out the licence and lease will be at risk if the situation is not sorted. SB questioned if there is a minimum age for fire cover, JH would need to check with the Insurance company. Initiatives have been in place previously including free food, flying time etc, still doesn't seem enough to entice people. In the past non-members are the ones who have volunteered. DP believes it may need to become a term of flying membership if the situation persists. Discussion around training requirements, DP suggested Simon runs a training event and get the training records up to date before the next inspection.

- IER Volunteer request to go on the board, **Action BC/RS**
- Request and information on IER Volunteer to go into the newsletter, **Action DP**
- Survey to go out to members to find out why people are not volunteering, **Action JH**

12) Hangars

DP confirmed all slots are currently filled and there is no waiting list.

A) Old hangar padlock

JH puts forward a proposal to replace the old hangar padlock with a new padlock that matches the rest so that members only have one key. All concurred and JH would order a replacement padlock.

B) Shipping container

JH updated that the shipping container on our land remains in dispute with Mr Wright, who believes it to be on his land. The insurance company would insure for £50 per year, which is negligible. JH noted there are now two aircraft in that shipping container. Now in a position where we have someone presumably paying Mr Wright directly for a container which is on our land. Mr Wright continues to argue the boundaries on the lease are incorrect. DP the container is on our land, and we now have a sub-letting issue. DP advised the outstanding question is, is this person paying the club, or paying Mr Wright, if the club is being paid, the situation could be ignored so long as the container is insured. Ideas including moving the container or deducting money off the rent to Mr Wright.

It was decided to form a subcommittee to speak about the situation. Subcommittee to include BC or JH who have the access to the finance, Peter as Hangar Manager and DP is happy to be involved. **Action: BC/JH/PB/DP**

Other points to note are Ivy continues to grow up the back of the new hangar and they are still leaking.

13) Events (Event Manager)

a) Wings and Wheels/Family Fun Day Sunday 27th August

CA confirmed arrangements were progressing nicely. Hunstanton concert band (to use Hangar 2) is now booked along with a band named Hold the Sky. Toilets and St Johns Ambulance also confirmed. JH advised that this event requires a separate policy and was hoping the near miss helicopter crash at the last event won't impact the cost of the policy and is waiting to hear. In addition, all stall holders attending must have public liability insurance and the booking form for stall holders had been amended to show this. The bouncy castle/rides/face painters all have their own liability insurance.

CA confirmed he was sending out booking forms following requests every night however responses remained slow. At the next meeting CA would begin to open it up to get more assistance and help. CA would like to extend his thanks to members who had ran previous events and had been a tremendous help. SB and the flying school have also been a tremendous help. In relation about the spot landing competition CA discussed briefly how it would run and proposed a prize of a free breakfast to the winner, all felt this was a good option. CA would ask members who attend on the day to show their membership cards and discussed the plans for parking.

Mr Wright had objected to the date of the event because he felt there were too many other events going on, on the same date.

CA requested a list of local airfields and let them know of the event so they can be contacted to encourage more people to fly in.

DP suggested in relation to volunteers it might be worth speaking to air cadets/army cadets, who often help with car parking etc.

In terms of advertising, fly posters were well underway, DP would include in the newsletter.

b) Air Racing

DP reiterated the detail which was discussed at the previous Committee meeting. DP reiterated the fact he felt that it would be a beneficial event, bringing something new to the airfield. SB voiced strong opposition to the proposal, believing the inconvenience to members and neighbours outweighed any benefits. The possibility of issuing a survey to Members was discussed with for and against arguments, however DP noted SB's strong opposition and would not take this further and communicate a refusal to the air racing body.

In terms of other events, DP stated that we needed to think about Fly ins which are simple to organise to get footfall in through the summer months. Suggestion of a student fly in etc. All suggestions to DP.

JH advised VAC was booked for either 27/28th May and there were no objections.

KG advised the Crusader Classic car club attending on the Easter Monday, they are purely using the car park. Confirmed there would be no charge for the car park.

JH requested KG to think about setting dates for other events to tie in with fly ins. KG was thinking of running a barbeque in the warmer months to make it quicker and easier and to save people waiting. DP advised fly ins were best at weekends. KG would give it consideration. **Action KG**

14) Fenland Flying School (Steve Brown)

SB asked if anything had progressed about the Directorship of Fenland Aeroclub Ltd since the last meeting, as it had been agreed previously that Committee members would be Directors. JH would speak to BC. **Action JH**

In relation to grass seed, Lee offered to do this, CA will ring and find out if he is going to do it, CA will progress either way.

SB noted the Paramotors all flew in the other way and paid £10 each and suggested that this should be reduced to £5 to encourage them and make them feel welcome. They do not use the runway or interfere with traffic. DP administering would be the hard bit as it is programmed. JH thought they were on the reciprocal use so they should not be charged at all. DP should be welcomed in and noted they are not banned. DC they got a frosty reception from the tower and mishap in the restaurant. Paramotors are not banned and this was to be noted.

a) Microlight training (David Almey email)

There is a Thruster T600 microlight and wondered if anyone wanted to buy it for £14,000 to run a microlight flying school at Fenland. DP the club cannot afford it, just need to mention that the offer has been made.

15) Runways Restaurant

KG requested assistance from Committee members in relation to the toilets in the building, which could be left in an unpleasant state. KG was happy for her team to clean and maintain, but requested they become more of a team effort in terms of replenishing supplies and making her aware of any issues. Committee members were happy to own this and help. DP would also put a reminder in the newsletter.

No other issues to report.

KG has prepared a safeguarding policy, she will send this to DP to review, then this will be brought back to the Committee.

CA queried when KG took over the restaurant there was a term for a monthly inspection by a Committee member. JH said that the policy was designed to give the Committee the

authority to inspect access if required rather than mandating it. Policy provides the ability should it be required, doesn't mean we have to. KG was fine with this.

16) Questions from attendees

None.

17) AOB

None

18) Date of next meeting

26th April 2023 at 18.00