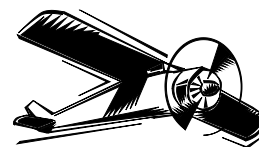


# FENLAND AERO CLUB – Committee

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## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FENLAND AERO CLUB COMMITTEE

<b>Present:</b>	Braden Connolly (BC), Josh Brown (JB), Rynardt Spies (RS), Steve Brown (SB), Rex Ford (RF), Kerry Goundry (KG), Steve Goundry (SG)
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**Thursday, 26 October 2023 18:30**

### AGENDA OF THE SAFETY MEETING OF THE FENLAND AERO CLUB

#### 1. Safety matters

##### a. Notes from Fenland Flying School CAA Audit

SB reported on a recent CAA audit, highlighting the requirement for a hazard log to be maintained. This log should include all potential hazards, such as mid-air collisions and soggy patches on runways, and the mitigation strategies for each. Follow-ups on safety form incidents were also discussed, with the auditor noting the need for proper documentation of these follow-ups, even if they occur a year later.

**BC to work with SB to compile the hazard log and review safety forms to ensure closure of issues.**

##### b. Runway Markings Visibility

SB also brought up the issue of runway markings on 26/08 not being visible, specifically the side markings, suggesting that a solution could involve spraying them with weed killer. BC asked JB if runway markings were part of the recurring actions, and JB did not affirm. RF advised against setting a strict schedule for remarking and instead recommended monthly inspections to determine if actions are needed. **JB agreed to add the task to the work schedule as a reminder for checks every three months.**

##### c. Update on Wings and Wheels MOR

BC mentioned an email from OW stating that there had been some communication regarding a follow-up on his MOR, but no closure had been achieved yet.

BC concluded the safety meeting, confirming that there were no additional points to be addressed.

### AGENDA OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE FENLAND AERO CLUB

#### 1. Apologies

Apologies were noted from OW, and CA.

#### 2. Minutes of previous meetings

The minutes of the meetings held on the 12th and 17th of August were up for approval. JB noted that the date for the 'wings and wheels' meeting was erroneously listed as

Thursday instead of Saturday. The correction has been made in the system. No other corrections for the minutes of the 12th of August were raised by the members present. RF proposed the approval of the minutes, which was seconded. The minutes were therefore signed off by BC.

The minutes of the 17th of August, which was a full meeting, were also discussed. RF expressed that they were an accurate record of the discussions held and proposed their approval. No changes or comments were brought forward for these minutes. BC signed off on the document, marking its approval.

### 3. Matters arising

#### a. Resignation Clarification and Procedure

Committee resignations and the need for formal rescission were discussed due to recent events where members, including Colin, verbally resigned on multiple occasions. RF emphasized the need for a formal reversal if Colin intends to remain on the committee. BC proposed sending a note to Colin to officially rescind any past resignations to confirm his committee status. Moving forward, the committee agreed that any verbal resignations during meetings would be followed up with a note within 24 hours to confirm if the resignation stands. If no response is received, the resignation will be accepted. This procedure aims to address impulsive resignations and maintain clarity on committee membership.

#### b. Radio Coverage and Tower Management

Concerns were raised by RF about the management of radio cover and tower manning responsibilities. It was discussed that a volunteer, might take on these duties, but further clarification was needed on the airfield's requirements based on the aerodrome manual and the conditions of the license. **BC agreed to add radio cover at Fenland as a standing agenda item to ensure proper coordination.** The committee also discussed the need to address the obligations of radio licence holders who have not fulfilled their agreed shifts. An action was assigned to **BC to write to these individuals to either fulfil their commitments or discuss the recovery of training costs.**

#### c. Implementation of Aerops System

BC discussed the implementation of the Air Ops system as a solution to out of hours logbook as well as an additional payment option for Jet A1 fuel and out of hours landing fees. While there were concerns about the cost of the system, it was noted that we already pay substantial fees on the payment terminal and the benefits of being able to process transactions when the airfield is closed, and potentially increasing revenue were recognized.

#### d. Flying Reporter Episode Proposal

BC proposed that the Aero Club share the cost of a Flying Reporter episode featuring Fenland Airfield with other based businesses. The episode, which would normally cost £500, would be reduced to £250 due to the airfield's agreement to implement the Aerops system.

BC shared that WD292 would be willing to split the costs with the Aero Club. The committee agreed to spend £125 for the Aero Club's share of the cost with JB and

RS voting in favour and BC abstaining due to declaring a potential conflict of interest given his involvement with WD292.

Invitations were then extended to Fenland Flying School and Runways to further share the costs as businesses on the airfield that would benefit from the episode. **Runways and FFS agreed to an equal contribution alongside the club and Chipmunk WD292 of £62.50.**

#### 4. Club administration

JB covered the current works schedule and raised the following for further discussion:

**Kitchen Extractor Ducting Deep Clean:** BC clarified that the responsibility for the deep cleaning falls to Runways, as it is a condition of the insurance and part of their licence. KG confirmed awareness of the requirement. JB requested notification once the cleaning is completed so it can be removed from the upcoming tasks.

**Electric Meter Installation:** BC reported that following a lack of response from the initially contacted electrician, that John Haynes was recommended. He has now met with BC and suggested installing a new distribution board with a meter.

The cost of the installation was confirmed to be £720 plus VAT, and the motion to proceed was carried with JB seconding and all in favour

**Data Protection Registration:** JB noted that the data protection registration would be coming up soon and he would handle the payment.

**Club Membership Payments via Runways:** JB raised an issue about a new social member's payment being processed through Runways instead of directly to the club. BC and KG discussed establishing a process for Runways to report memberships sold and transfer the corresponding funds to the club. It was suggested that the application form should indicate how the payment was made. It was acknowledged that there may be a cost to Runways for handling these transactions, but BC noted that the club offers incentives that could offset this cost.

**East Anglia Airspace Users Working Group Invitation:** JB mentioned an invitation to the East Anglia Airspace Users Working Group meeting in February. BC expressed interest in attending and requested the details to respond.

**Firefighting Foam:** RF brought up the subject of two drums of foam, explaining that the current foam would become prohibited, and Lee had found a deal for compliant foam for future use.

**SAPI Correspondence:** Lastly, the SAPI correspondence was discussed, with several members noting it as a priority that had been delayed. **BC committed to making it a priority moving forward.** RF emphasized the importance of addressing it promptly.

#### 5. Memberships

SB provided an update on club membership growth, reporting the addition of four new flying members, one of whom intends to hangar an airplane at the club. Additionally, three new students have joined the flying school, and two new social members were

welcomed.

### **Proposal regarding clubhouse / restaurant reservations**

SB introduced a proposal aimed at increasing social memberships by allowing table reservations in the clubhouse/restaurant. It was clarified that current policy allows members to book tables far in advance, while non-members can only make reservations starting from the Thursday before the upcoming Sunday, as Sunday is the primary day for bookings. There was debate on whether tables should be held unreserved for members, with SG stating that reserving tables exclusively for members from Thursday to Sunday would likely result in empty tables.

RF questioned if there was a policy to keep some tables unreserved for bona fide club members. SG responded that in his year of experience, no member has complained about being unable to get a table. He proposed that if a member does call for a booking and the restaurant has non-member bookings, the staff would accommodate the member.

KG echoed the sentiment, mentioning that the practice of inquiring about membership status during phone bookings sometimes leads to negative reactions from callers. SG emphasized that non-member business is essential for the viability of the restaurant.

RS expressed frustration about hearing complaints regarding member access but having no direct reports or emails regarding such issues. SB shared an anecdote about a club member who was unable to get a table due to an event for non-members, illustrating the need for balance.

BC suggested that members already have the advantage of booking tables in advance and receive a 15% discount at Runways, which should be emphasized to encourage social membership. KG and SG noted they have been working to convert regular non-member visitors into social members.

The discussion highlighted the challenges of balancing the needs of club members with the need for Runways to maintain a viable business by attracting non-members. RS pointed out the impracticality of expecting the club to operate as it did in the past, with volunteers running the restaurant, and emphasized the importance of keeping the clubhouse open for longer hours to attract visitors and retain members.

JB commented that the introduction of new non-members is vital for the growth and continuation of the club given that all members were at some point not a member, and typically people visit several times before becoming a member or choosing to learn to fly.

BC concluded that while the club appreciates the value Runways brings, there needs to be mutual support among all businesses operating at the airfield. He acknowledged the strain on Runways and suggested that suggestions for improvement should be presented with consideration for their current business challenges. The discussion ended with an agreement that increased social membership could benefit both the club and Runways, and that members should feel welcome to voice concerns directly to the

committee or restaurant staff.

## **6. Finance**

RS reported on the current financial status, noting that fuel prices have increased and that the bank accounts are low, with approximately £6,000 in the bank and £40,000 in savings. He mentioned that despite significant expenditure on fuel, the tanks are full, and there are no major expenses expected in the near future. RS also brought to attention that there is around £7,000 in arrears for hangarage. Mel and PB have been actively pursuing these arrears.

RF inquired about the payment methods for hangarage and whether there is a cut-off for outstanding payments leading to loss of hangar space. BC explained that there are various payment methods, and in the past committee as the treasurer, he would initiate contact with members in arrears, often resulting in prompt payments. He detailed the process of proposing payment plans and the consequences of not adhering to them, including potential eviction from the hangar.

RS noted that the amount of outstanding hangarage was more than expected and that some of the individuals on the list were surprising. BC emphasized the need for RS to follow up with these members and offered his support if needed. RF stressed the importance of members meeting their financial obligations to the club, hinting at the potential for implementing interest charges on late payments, although BC suggested focusing on getting members caught up on payments first.

The discussion concluded with the agreement that the treasurer would work on getting members caught up on their arrears, with the support of the committee. RS planned to consult with Mel for an update on the status of payments and proceed with follow-ups as necessary. BC reassured RS of the committee's support and encouraged a collaborative approach to resolving the issue.

## **7. Fuel**

RS revisited the decisions made in the previous committee meeting about the markup on fuel. BC acknowledged a need to review the fuel volumes sold and provided a post-meeting report. RS was able to access this information through system records. BC admitted that the markup rates previously agreed upon were not sufficient for maintaining the desired margins. Consequently, he initiated a vote via WhatsApp among voting members to rectify this, which resulted in agreeing to a higher margin than initially minuted. The new agreed average margin was 25 pence per litre, which was in line with RS's financial forecasts.

RF inquired about the price adjustments, particularly concerning UL 91 fuel, which would have decreased in price if the original margin was maintained. BC clarified that even though they could set prices based on a percentage above cost, they needed to achieve a 25 pence per litre margin to meet the budget requirements. BC mentioned that the WhatsApp communication would reflect the details of the agreed changes.

RS expressed concerns about setting fuel prices based on quotes received before ordering fuel. BC confirmed they had the flexibility to adjust prices before new fuel

deliveries if they remained within the agreed margins. He mentioned the exception with Flying Score, where they could charge no more than 10% above cost. BC promised to review the fuel prices over the weekend to ensure they meet the necessary margins, considering all associated costs, including pumps and the telephone line.

## 8. Safety matters

There were no additional safety matters to raise that were not already covered in the previous safety meeting.

## 9. Airfield general

### a. Airfield Lighting

RS highlighted concerns about broken lights at the airfield, mentioning that Lee had identified some issues and that Robin had fixed some lights and recommended switching back to glass bulkhead lights for durability. The cost for about seven lights was estimated at approximately £12 each. BC expressed concerns about the potential hazard to aircraft tires from glass lights and suggested the possibility of using frangible plastic lights instead, which could be removed during the summer months. RF pointed out the longevity of glass and the minimal cost even if they were to break. SB also voiced his opinion, suggesting that glass would not pose a significant danger to aircraft. RS mentioned the idea of using cages over the lights but discarded it due to the increased risk. **After further discussion, BC called for a decision on the budget for lights, with a proposal to spend a maximum of £200 on lights. JB seconded the motion, and the proposal was agreed upon.**

### b. Airfield Maintenance

RS brought up the issue of potholes at the entrance of the airfield, stressing the need for action to be taken. KG and others echoed the concern, noting the impact on vehicles, including a Fiat 500. RF suggested a mix of hardcore and concrete for a durable repair.

## 10. Accountable manager

The Accountable Manager was not present but had provided an update regarding communications with the CAA, which had been touched upon earlier in the meeting. It was noted that a response from the CAA was unlikely, and it was agreed that this matter could be considered closed.

## 11. IER/RFFS

BC brought up the topic of IER RFFS and suggested that it should be considered alongside the tower radio due to their interrelated nature. He proposed that future meetings should include an evaluation of the level of cover provided by both elements as they are integral to each other. No additional comments or suggestions were made on this topic at this time.

## 12. Hangars

The issue of outstanding payments for hangars was briefly covered by RS with the acknowledgment that the Hanger Manager was not present. SB suggested implementing an interest policy for unpaid fees after three months to serve as an

incentive. RF opposed the idea, stating that the club is not a bank, while RS proposed a penalty for late payments. BC questioned the enforcement of existing policies. RF recommended encouraging automatic payments, proposing higher fees for non-standing order payments, highlighting that businesses often operate with automatic transactions as a standard. RS questioned the feasibility of Direct Debit arrangements, to which RF confirmed their possibility.

BC suggested exploring a simple policy where payments made via standing order or direct debit might be charged at list price, and those could not incur a 10% surcharge. He also mentioned that changes in pricing policy should be introduced gradually and potentially discussed at a future meeting or AGM for member input.

RS inquired about the possibility of adjusting prices based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in January, to which BC clarified that any price adjustments would require committee approval and could theoretically be implemented at any time, though frequent changes might be negatively perceived. BC indicated that the timing of discussions on pricing and payment methods could be determined by RS.

### **13. Events**

RF brought up inquiries about whether the Wings and Wheels event would take place next year and the need for setting a date. KG mentioned that the Kings Lynn Crusaders are seeking to include the event in their brochure and are requesting a date as soon as possible, suggesting September.

A brief discussion followed regarding the suitability of the September bank holiday weekend for the event, with no strong justification for changing it. BC proposed scheduling an interim meeting specifically focused on events to outline the 2024 events schedule, taking into consideration various requests and existing commitments like aerobatics and fly-ins. RF agreed on the urgency of this meeting. KG also raised the query from a Car Club about whether their event would be on a Thursday instead of a Wednesday.

BC suggested this should all be addressed in a separate event meeting as there were additional events to consider such as air race and aerobatics.

### **14. Fenland Flying School**

The committee acknowledged the upcoming Flying School Christmas Quiz. There were no other updates.

### **15. Runways Restaurant**

KG reported on the upcoming winter events aimed at public support rather than members due to the seasonal slowdown. A successful Polish event will be replicated on Poland's Independence Day, November 11, and an evening party is scheduled for November 24. Additionally, a monthly quiz night is planned to begin on the third Thursday of each month, with a members' discount. A Christmas event with a live singer is set for December 15, open to both members and non-members, offering larger discounts for members. Menus and pricing are still to be finalized.

BC mentioned the tradition of inviting the Holbeach brass band to perform carols during

the Christmas season. KG was interested in the idea and inquired about coordination logistics. BC indicated that Dave Petters would have the necessary contact details. KG agreed to the idea of scheduling the brass band performance before the December break.

**16. Questions from attendees and AOB**

No further questions, or AOB.

**17. Date of next meeting**

BC proposed, and the committee agreed to a vote in a poll on WhatsApp to determine a suitable date for the next main meeting and the events meeting that was discussed.

**18. Closure of meeting**

The meeting closed at 20:16