

## NOWTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 7<sup>th</sup> April 2021  
at 7.30 p.m. via Zoom

**Present:** Councillor - Mrs Carol Perry (Chairman)  
Councillor - Mr Henry Hopking  
Councillor - Mr Mike May  
Parish Clerk - Mrs Pauline Stoddart

Prior to the meeting commencing, 10 Minute Public Forum - one member of the public was present.

**In attendance:** County Councillor Karen Soons and District Councillor Terry Clements.  
The meeting was adjourned whilst Cllrs. Soons and Clements presented their reports, after which they left the meeting.

**Report from Cllr. Clements** – Cllr. Clements briefly outlined some current issues, which included the Council’s website, he had raised some questions and believed it required scrutiny. Cllr. Clements hoped to be included on the housing working party, where he felt he could do useful work, particularly with regards to an increase in lower banded properties.

**Report from Cllr. Soons** – Cllr. Soons’ April report had been previously circulated by the Clerk to Councillors. Cllr. Soons highlighted some points from her report including the climate emergency and Covid recovery plan; 98% of school pupils had received their preferred place; feed-back on the recycling booking scheme; details of the digital care packages that the Council has been working on during the pandemic; the Council’s target for being carbon neutral; quiet lanes initiative; the Government’s UK broadband initiative and the additional £500K for highway improvements near schools.

Cllr. May advised that despite sending a further email to the appropriate body requesting the replacement of the post-box which had been stolen, he had received little encouragement and asked whether Cllr. Soons might be able help. Cllr. Soons requested a copy of the latest email from Cllr. May. **Action: Cllr. May**

The Chairman asked whether the booking system at the recycling centre would be permanent. Cllr. Soons responded that feed-back was presently being sought; she personally felt that there should be an exceptions policy, with some telephone and walk-in slots available, as not everyone used the internet or had places to store waste before a suitable slot became available.

Cllr. Hopking thanked Cllr. Soons for her communications and support; he was pleased that some gullies in Nowton were due to be jetted out on the 1<sup>st</sup> May. Cllr. Soons asked that she be notified if this work had not been carried out on that day. **Action: Cllr. Hopking**

1. **Apologies for Absence** – Cllr. Flatt

2. **Declarations of Interest** – none.

3. **Approval of the draft Minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021** Cllr. Hopking noted that the draft minutes gave the date as 8<sup>th</sup> May for the Speeding Webinar, when the correct date should have been **8<sup>th</sup> March**; with this amendment made to Item 9, the minutes were approved as a true and accurate record. Proposed by Cllr. Hopking, seconded by Cllr. May. The minutes would be signed by the Chairman when the Parish Council next physically met.

4. **Matters arising from the Minutes of 3 March meeting** – The Chairman asked whether the new notice board for the bus shelter had been ordered. The Clerk responded that the preferred model was presently out of stock but she would look at possible other designs, with the view to bringing a new notice board to the next meeting. **Action: Clerk**

5. **Vacancy for Parish Councillor** - The Chairman introduced Ms Abigail Smith, who had submitted her application for the position of Parish Councillor, and was present at the meeting. Councillors had already been given the opportunity of examining her application and to ask any questions. The co-option of Ms Smith was welcomed collectively by the Parish Council. Proposed by Cllr. Hopking, seconded by the Chairman.  
**Agreed unanimously.**

The Clerk would make arrangements with Ms Smith for the signing and witnessing of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and the completing of the Register of Members' Interests. **Action: Clerk**

6. **Finance** - Account balances: Community £853.25; Business Premium £4,700.13  
Total: £5,553.38

Two cheques were approved for payment – Proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr. May.

100374 Clerks salary Q4 Jan-March	£260.00
100375 HMRC, re above	£65.00

6.1 Year-end 31 March 2021, arrangements for Audit – the Clerk had received the details for the external audit by PKF Little-John and went through the timetable for the specific dates for action. The Clerk would prepare the year-end accounts by mid-April and requested that the Internal Auditor return them in time for the meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> May when Councillors would need to approve and sign the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). The Chairman offered to inform the Internal Auditor of this. **Action: Chairman**

7. **Model Internal Control Statement and Report** – the draft reviewed by SALC in March 2021 had been previously circulated to Councillors by the Clerk. Whilst the Council already had SALC approved internal financial controls in place, the Clerk explained that this new draft had several additions, the main one being that a non-signatory Councillor be appointed to conduct a review of the system of internal control, via given tests on a quarterly basis with a written report of any findings to be submitted to the Council. After discussion it was agreed that the Clerk would produce a briefing listing the duties this role would entail and it would be discussed further as an Agenda item at the next meeting.  
**Action: Clerk**

8. **Emergency Plan** – the Chairman reported that Suffolk County Council had requested a copy of the Council's latest Emergency Plan; the 2018 plan had been submitted with a note to advise that an updated Plan would be issued in September, giving the Council the summer to collect and collate the necessary details and information. **Action: All**

9. **Planning** – no planning applications to hand.

10. **Speeding** – Cllr. Hopking reported that he had attended the Speeding Webinar on the 8<sup>th</sup> March. He reported that speeding in Nowton was mainly a problem during the rush hour and that one of the main points he had gained from the Webinar was, rather than electronic signage, but in addition to traffic monitoring which had already been requested, to look at what could be achieved within the village, such as sign cleaning, planting bulbs, general

tidying, particularly around the entry points to the village, so that drivers were more aware they were entering a 30MPH zone, within a village that was well cared for.

Cllr. Hopking suggested this would be a good community project and proposed that a sum of £100 be taken from the bus shelter allocation budget, for the purchase of bulbs and flowers, and ensuring that there was management of the verges. The Clerk advised that the figures within the yearly budget spend was for the Council to allocate, as long as the total budget set was not exceeded. Cllr. Hopking suggested the proposal was a long term plan, over a five-year period. The Clerk would look into the statutory provisions for such purchases and the matter would be discussed further at the next meeting where it would be an Agenda item. **Action: Clerk**

The Chairman advised that a new Community Engagement Officer had been appointed and the Clerk would make contact in relation to the visits by the Road Safety Camera Team, for which Nowton was already on the list. **Action: Clerk**

- 11. Road Safety Crime/Public Nuisance** – Cllr. May reported that several areas within the village were strewn with litter and required attention. Cllr. Hopking reported that he had contacted the Nowton Park Ranger the previous week after finding quantities of rubbish, including human waste, and praised the swift action of the Nowton Park team in speedily rectifying the problem. Cllr. May had received information that loud music could be heard coming from Nowton Park, after the gates had been closed in the evening. There was a suspicion that vehicles could still be driven out of the Park after the gates had been closed; Cllr. May would find out more details and then speak with the Park Ranger as necessary. **Action: Cllr. May**

The Chairman confirmed that regular ‘spring cleans’ had been carried out by village volunteers in the past, but that litter picking was now undertaken on an unorganised ‘ad hoc’ basis by various parishioners. The Chairman agreed it was a subject to think about for the future.

- 12. Correspondence** – relevant email correspondence from NALC and SALC had been circulated by the Clerk to Councillors as and when received.

**13. Next Meetings** –

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> May, 7.30pm Annual Parish Council Meeting, in Nowton Village Hall.  
Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> May, 8.15pm Annual Assembly of the Parish, in Nowton Village Hall.

*The Annual Assembly of the Parish (Parish AGM) is the annual opportunity for parishioners to receive annual reports and discuss with Councillors any village concerns or interests.*

Further meetings for 2021: July 7; September 22; October 20; December 1.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 8.20 p.m.

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Signed

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Date