

NOWTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 3rd March 2021
At 7.30 p.m. via Zoom/Conference Call

Present: Councillor - Mrs Carol Perry (Chairman)
Councillor - Mr David Flatt
Councillor - Mr Jon Green
Councillor - Mr Henry Hopking
Councillor - Mr Mike May
Parish Clerk - Mrs Pauline Stoddart

Prior to the meeting commencing, 10 Minute Public Forum - no members of the public were 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 outlined the West Suffolk budget which he advised had increased by 0.9% and was overall a balanced budget.

Cllr. Clements would be sending an email to the Clerk highlighting Healthwatch Suffolk, which he felt would be worthwhile circulating to all Councillors. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr. Clements offered funding from his Locality Budget towards the purchase of a new Notice Board for the bus shelter. This would be discussed by Councillors under item 5.1 on the agenda.

Report from Cllr. Soons – Cllr. Soons outlined the Suffolk County Council budget for 2021-2022 which she said had risen by some £41M from the previous year, to £597.9M. She advised that 75% of the annual budget would be spent helping the most vulnerable in society adding that these were very challenging times.

Highways had doubled the drainage budget and Cllr. Soons was hopeful of obtaining Nowton's fair share, particularly for those roads which were frequently affected by flooding; she welcomed any further information to strengthen the case.

Cllr. Soons reported that a change in regulation to 40MPH near Whelnetham had been obtained; whilst not along the whole of Stanningfield Road, it would hopefully act as a buffer.

Cllr. Soons advised that she had trained as a Covid vaccinator, although with the elections being held on the 6th May she would be reducing this work. She advised that election literature would be distributed a little later than usual, due to Covid restrictions.

From Cllr. Soons' March report, which had been previously circulated to Councillors, the Chairman mentioned she was particularly pleased to see that water, which in the past had been pumped into the river Deben, was being used for good alternative purposes.

Cllr. May advised that the worst of the potholes in Sheepwash Lane had been filled, but that at Low Green, on the road towards Sicklesmere, the edges of the road had crumbled and traffic cones were still in place. Cllr. Soons advised that Highways had been given extended deadlines to complete work; she recommended taking photos in two weeks' time, if the work had not been started, and sending them to her in order that she could chase up.

Action: Cllr. May

Cllr. May asked whether it was permissible to remove signs (advertising goods for sale, put up by the public) which he felt were dangerously masking a clear view for drivers at the T-junction from Low Green to Sicklesmere. Cllr. Soons believed that anyone, if it was safe to do so, could remove non-authorized signs.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – none, all present.
2. **Declarations of Interest** – none.
3. **Approval of the draft Minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on 13 January 2021** – 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 13 January meeting** – Cllr. May reported that he had received further communication from the office of Jo Churchill MP, asking him to contact the office again in two weeks' time, should nothing have been heard in respect of the stolen post box. **Action: Cllr. May**
5. **Finance** - Account balances: Community £1,169.25; Business Premium £4,700.01
Total: £5,869.26
 - 5.1 Purchase of Notice Board for Bus Shelter. Proposed by Cllr. May, seconded by Cllr. Green. After discussion it was agreed to accept Cllr. Clements' offer of funding towards the cost of the Notice Board from his Locality Budget. The Clerk to email Cllr. Clements on behalf of the Parish Council to accept his kind offer. **Action: Clerk**
 - 5.2 Budget Review Q3. Councillors were content that the figures were presently under budget and this had already been reflected in the reduced amount of Precept requested for 2021-22.
6. **Planning** – no planning applications had been received.
7. **Annual Parish Council and Annual Parish Assembly meetings** – Councillors were in agreement that, if Covid regulations allowed, it would be preferable to meet in the Village Hall, rather than virtually when the meetings would need to be held by 6th May. It was, therefore, agreed to change the date of the two annual meetings from the originally planned date of 12th May, to the **19th May 2021**. **Action: Clerk**
8. **Road Safety Crime/Public Nuisance** – Cllr. May confirmed that he would remove the signs that were causing an obstruction to the clear vision for drivers on the T-junction, as mentioned to Cllr. Soons (see above). **Action: Cllr. May**
9. **Correspondence** – The Clerk advised that the March issue of *Clerks & Councillors Direct* had been received. The Pensions Regulator had contacted the Clerk with details for the online re-declaration of compliance, which she would complete by the key dates. All other relevant correspondence received via email had been circulated to Councillors as and when received.

The Clerk reminded Councillors that the Parish Council elections were due to take place on 6th May and that nominations needed to be submitted to the Returning Officer by 8th April. Details of the process would automatically be sent, in due course.

Cllr. Hopking reported that he would be attending a Speeding Webinar on the 8th March and would report back on same. **Action: Cllr. Hopking**

The Chairman mentioned that St Peter's Church was trying to raise funds of £21,000 in order to replace broken stained-glass windows. Anyone wishing to find out more or donate should contact Adrian Potter, telephone 01284 754349.

The Chairman announced that this would be Cllr. Green's last meeting as a Parish Councillor as he was moving out of the area. She thanked Cllr. Green for all his help and good advice during his time as a Parish Councillor and wished him well for the future, wishes that were echoed by all the other Councillors and the Clerk.

10. Next Meeting – Wednesday 7th April, 7.30pm via Zoom in line with guidelines.

Further meetings for 2021: May 19 (*Annual Parish Council & Annual Parish Assembly meetings*); July 7; September 22; October 20; December 1.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 8.10 p.m.

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Signed

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Date