

NOWTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Parish held 19th May 2021

At 8.15 p.m. in Nowton Village Hall, Nowton

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

Also in attendance: Cllr. Karen Soons, Cllr. Terry Clements, Mr. Andrew Tucker.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – Pc Lee Andrews-Pearce, Community Engagement Officer
2. **To ratify the Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on the 22nd May 2019**, having been approved by the Council at its meeting held on the 10th July 2019. Proposed by Cllr. May, seconded by Cllr. Flatt. The Chairman advised that due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Council did not hold an Annual Assembly of the Parish in 2020.
3. **Annual Report of the Parish Council**, by the Chairman of the Parish Council. The Chairman began by welcoming the two new Councillors, Cllrs. Hopking and Smith, and by thanking all Councillors for their hard work during the past year, she said it was heart-warming and uplifting to see neighbours and friends helping one another during the difficult times of lockdown.

The Chairman thanked County Councillor Karen Soons and West Suffolk Councillor Terry Clements for all their help and support, and Andy Tucker, Area B Safer Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator, for keeping everyone so well informed, particularly providing updated guidance and information during the pandemic.

The entire report can be seen in Appendix 1.

4. **Annual Police Report and Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch Report** - Mr Tucker began his report by saying that Area B had grown to an incredible level and he was now electronically reaching more than 2,500 people. He reported that Nowton was a very safe place to live and that the County had the tenth lowest crime rate in England and Wales.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Tucker for his report, who then left the meeting.

The entire report, including crime statistics, can be seen in Appendix 2.

5. **Annual Suffolk County Council Report** – Cllr. Soons highlighted various points within her report including SCC's important green policy, to reduce the carbon footprint, and the securing of £3.1M to promote capital energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation projects within buildings. Cllr. Soons advised that some of the Covid-19 test centres were closing due to lower levels of footfall, due in the main to the availability of free home testing kits from the Government. Other points highlighted from her report included digital connectivity in rural areas; the doubling of the Highways drainage budget, and the use of buses, which she advised SCC would re-assess after Covid.

Cllr. Hopking reported that the drains were still blocked along the Bury Road; Cllr. Soons requested that Cllr. Hopking send her an email concerning this. **Action: Cllr. Hopking**

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Soons for her report, and all her support during the past year.

The full report can be seen in Appendix 5.

6. **Annual West Suffolk Council Report** – Cllr. Clements reported that it was not only rural areas that suffered from poor digital connectivity; having to work from home, rather than going to West Suffolk House, he found it extremely difficult to use the WSC website as his only way to communicate with the Council and he realised the difficulty his residents were experiencing first-hand.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Clements for his Locality Budget grant, which had been used to purchase a new Notice Board for the bus shelter, and for his help and support throughout the year.

The full report can be seen in Appendix 6.

Cllr. Hopking asked Cllr. Clements whether there were any WSC grants available in connection with conservation and wildlife. Cllr. Clements advised that any project aimed at enhancing the village would be looked upon favourably and recommended putting a project together and early application.

7. **Financial Report of the Parish Council**, by the Responsible Financial Officer. A detailed Income and Expenditure paper and Balance Sheet had been previously circulated. The total income for the year amounted to £3,446 and the total expenditure £2,770. The RFO advised that funds were presently higher than was ideal, due partly to the Coronavirus pandemic resulting in less than budgeted expenditure.

The Notice of Public Rights and publication of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return will be published on the Council’s website – nowton.onesuffolk.net **Action: Clerk**

8. **Any Other Business or questions from the floor** – none.

The meeting was closed at 8.50 p.m.

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Signed

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Date