

## NOWTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 6<sup>th</sup> April 2022

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

Prior to the meeting commencing, 10 Minute Public Forum – No members of the public were present.

Attendees: Cllr. Karen Soons joined the meeting at 2010 hrs; the meeting was adjourned until 2030 hrs. for discussion with Councillors. Cllr. Soons advised that she would be sending her monthly report shortly and highlighted a couple of items contained within her report, including advising that within the pension fund a £4M Russian holding had been written down to zero. During the meeting Cllr. Soons followed up her previous request to the Highways Engineer for a meeting with representatives of Nowton Parish Council, in relation to road flooding.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – None, all present. With permission Cllr. Perry left the meeting at 2055 hrs. during agenda item 10.
2. **Declarations of Interest** – none.
3. **Approval of the draft Minutes from the meeting held 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022** – Approved as a true and accurate record. Proposed by Cllr. May, seconded by Cllr. Flatt and duly signed by the Chairman.
4. **Matters arising from the Minutes 2<sup>nd</sup> March, not already on the agenda** – Cllr. Perry asked if there had been any update concerning the request for an increase to the present bus service. The Chairman reported that he had been advised this request was unlikely to be met, however, from April bus passes could be relinquished in return for £100 towards taxi vouchers.
5. **Finance** – the tabled year-end accounts to 31.3.2022 showed the following:  
Current Account: £1,049.16; Business Account: £4,692.70. Total: £5,741.86  
The Bank Reconciliation showed the amount being brought forward as £5,310.66

5.1 Cheques approved and issued:  
100396 P. Stoddart, Clerk Q4 salary £431.20

The Clerk advised that £106.20 was included in the Q4 salary, representing a refund of Income Tax paid during the year, as instructed by HMRC; the Clerk assumed a refund would be forthcoming from HMRC to the Council for the sum of £106.20, in due course.

5.2 Q4 Internal Control Report – Cllr. Smith submitted the Q4 statement and, after a query concerning the Assets Register, confirmed she had no issues. The Clerk confirmed that, following attending an on-line accounting session with Scribe, arranged for Clerks by SALC, the instruction given was that assets of Parish Councils should not be subject to annual depreciation.

The Chairman reported that he had requested quotes from four individuals/firms for the repainting of the Bus Shelter; Cllr. Perry offered to send the Chairman the contact details of the person who undertook previous work on the bus shelter.

**Action: Cllr. Perry**

Cllr. Smith asked whether a trellis with climbing plants might be incorporated on the outside wall of the bus shelter. Cllr. Flatt offered to explore what plants might be suitable for the wall, which was north facing. **Action: Cllr. Flatt**

The Chairman reported that he and Cllr. May would work on the Village Sign. It was hoped to have all works to the bus shelter and village sign completed by the Jubilee celebrations.

- 5.3 Q4 Budget Review – the year-end 31.3.2022 budget review was tabled and showed an underspend of £756.71; it was agreed that should quotes for the repainting of the Bus Shelter amount to more than the amount budgeted, additional funds could be allocated towards this work. It was agreed that, on this occasion, the bus shelter should be re-painted the same cream colour as at present.

The Clerk informed that the funds presently held were higher than the ideal of one year's anticipated expenditure.

Cllr. Smith suggested that the Council contribute to the costs of producing the village newsletter; the Chairman put forward the possibility of joining with the Horringer newsletter. Cllr. Perry reminded Councillors that any funding towards newsletters must incorporate the delivery of the newsletter to residents of Nowton as a direct benefit. The Chairman advised that he would contact the previous editor of the Benefice newsletter, which used to be delivered to all residents. **Action: Chairman**

- 5.4 Year-end 31 March 2022, arrangements for Audit – the Clerk went through the tabled time-line for the arrangements for Audit.

The Certificate of Exemption (AGAR 2021/22 Form 2) Proposed by Cllr. May, seconded by Cllr. Flatt, agreed and signed by the RFO and the Chairman. The Clerk would return the Certificate to the External Auditors prior the due date.

**Action: Clerk**

6. **Planning** – DC/22/0105/FUL, Breckey Ley, Old Town Lane, Nowton, IP29 5LT  
a. single dwelling b. demolition of the Dower House c. single storey workshop with covered parking d. orangery e. installation of a LZC ground source heat pump f. new landscaping including tree planting, driveway, two natural ponds and infilling a disused outdoor pool g. alterations to the residential curtilage.

Having spoken to the Case Officer, the Chairman updated Councillors and outlined the present concerns of the planning department, which included the position and overall size of the new dwelling. After a full discussion where Councillors each expressed their views, it was resolved that the Council would make its response to the application as No Comment. In addition, the Council would request that it be advised of any significant changes to this application in the future. **Action: Clerk**

7. **Code of Conduct** - The Clerk reported that SALC had recommended Parish Councils adopt the new Code of Conduct at their Annual Parish Council meetings; Councillors resolved to adopt the new Code at the meeting being held on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

8. **Annual Assembly of the Parish, 18 May at 8.15pm, draft agenda for discussion** – Councillors viewed the tabled draft agenda and the following agenda items were added:

- Report by the Village Hall Chairman, Abigail Smith
- The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

In addition, the Clerk was instructed to invite a representative from both Nowton Park and Nowton Cricket Club to attend and present a report, if they were amenable to this, or otherwise to attend in order to respond to any questions parishioners may wish to raise with them. **Action: Clerk**

9. **The Queen's Platinum Jubilee 2022** – Cllr. Smith requested, and it was agreed, that this item be deferred until the next meeting, before which the Village Hall Committee would have met and Cllr. Smith would, therefore, be in a better position to outline the Committee's proposals.

The Chairman restated that the organisation and running of the events for the Jubilee were to be voluntary community lead projects; the Parish Council would lend its support, as previously agreed, by contributing £500 towards the costs of the celebrations.

10. **Road Safety, Crime/Public Nuisance** – Cllr. May mentioned pot holes at High Green and the Chairman would inform the village Facebook group that pot holes could be reported on-line.

The Chairman requested that Cllr. Soons be alerted to the condition of the road surface from the Sicklesmere junction to Hawstead Road; it was felt this would be a significant project to re-build the road. **Action: Clerk**

The Chairman relayed concerns from a resident regarding dead and injured deer in Nowton Park, due to attacks from dogs that were not under control. It was hoped that such concerns could be discussed at the Annual Assembly of the Parish. Cllr. Smith offered to undertake some research, by contacting other parks and seeking possible solutions to this problem. **Action: Cllr. Smith**

Cllr. Smith mentioned finding small silver canisters in the vicinity of the Village Hall and asked that a look-out be kept for any groups that might gather there.

The Chairman had noticed that the Cooper Lane sign, which was fixed to a property, was worn and almost illegible; he wondered whether it should be replaced. Cllr. Smith offered to speak with the householder, to establish if a replacement was wanted.

**Action: Cllr. Smith**

11. **Nowton Village Website/Facebook Group** – The Chairman reported that activities within the village were published both in the newsletter and Facebook Group. The Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator was prominent within the Group that presently had 36 members.

12. **Correspondence** –The Chairman reported that he had sent a note of thanks, on behalf of the Parish Council and residents of Nowton, to Dwaine Gray, in thanks for his help and support as a Ranger at Nowton Park for the past 22 years.

13. **Next meeting – Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> May 7.30 pm Annual Parish Council**  
**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> May 8.15 pm Annual Assembly of the Parish**

Future 2022 meetings: 6 July; 21 September; 19 October; 7 December.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was closed at 9 pm

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Signed

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Date