

NOWTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 2nd March 2022

Present: Councillor - Mr Henry Hopking (Chairman)
Councillor - Mr David Flatt
Councillor - Mr Mike May
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: Borough Cllr. Nick Wiseman was present for the whole meeting; County Cllr. Karen Soons presented her report following Item 6, after the meeting had been adjourned, and was present for Items 10 & 11, which were taken out of Agenda order, by request of the Chairman and agreement from Councillors.

Cllr. Wiseman was attending his first meeting of Nowton Parish Council and was welcomed by the Chairman. Cllr. Wiseman updated Councillors, mentioning the awareness of the Police regarding cars parked in the Village Hall car park and also advising that he hoped the Council might benefit from his Locality Budget funding in the future.

Cllr. Soons highlighted several points within her report, which she had emailed to the Clerk that evening, for onward transmission to Councillors. In light of the increase in the budget for road schemes, the Chairman asked if some of those funds could not be utilised to improve the long-standing problem of flooding in Bury Road, by diverting the water under the road. Cllr. Soons requested an email be sent to her concerning this issue and offered to arrange a meeting with the Highways Department. **Action: Clerk** Cllr. Smith suggested that it might be beneficial for the owner of adjoining and affected land to also be invited to the meeting.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – Cllr. Perry.
2. **Declarations of Interest** – none.
3. **Approval of the draft Minutes from the meeting held 12th January 2022** – Approved as a true and accurate record. Proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. May and duly signed by the Chairman.
4. **Matters arising from the Minutes 12th January, not already on the agenda** – the Chairman updated Councillors on Planning Application DC/22/0105/FUL reporting that WSC Planning Department were still awaiting comments to be received, but that he understood there were no fundamental changes to the plans.
5. **Approval of the draft Minutes from the meeting held 9th February 2022** – Approved as a true and accurate record. Proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. May and duly signed by the Chairman.
6. **Matters arising from the Minutes 9th February** – none.
7. **Finance** – Current Account: £1,447.80; Business Account: £4,692.58. Total: £6,140.38
The Clerk requested that all cheques previously issued should be banked prior to the financial year-end.
8. **Planning** –
 - 8.1 DC/22/0094/FUL & DC/22/0095/LB – conversion of stable block to dwelling house with associated external alterations, Nowton Lodge Farm, Low Green.

The Chairman, having spoken to the Planning Officer responsible, advised that Local Plan policy had not been adhered to, in particular DM33 and DM28 which referred to the residential use of redundant buildings in the countryside. Councillors therefore resolved to make no comment, leaving the decision for these particular applications to the WSC Planning Department. **Action: Clerk**

- 8.2 Policy Statement, Planning – ratification and signing of the paper considered at the 9th February meeting. Councillors resolved to adopt the Planning Policy Statement. Proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. May and duly signed by the Chairman.
- 8.3 Scheme of Delegation to the Parish Clerk – ratification and signing of the paper considered at the 9th February meeting. Councillors resolved to adopt the Scheme of Delegation to the Parish Clerk. Proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. May and duly signed by the Chairman.

- 9. The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee 2022** – The Chairman reiterated that the organisation and running of the events for the Jubilee should be community lead projects, rather than Parish Council business, although the Parish Council would lend its support with funding and had allocated £500 in the precept for this purpose.

The Village Hall committee would also be contributing to the Jubilee and Cllr. Smith put forward several ideas for possible inclusion in the celebrations, including the suggestion of a commemorative bench. Cllr. Wiseman suggested that some funds from his Locality Budget might be used for this purpose; he would send Cllr. Smith the relevant forms for completion. **Action: Cllr. Wiseman**

The Queen’s Green Canopy - the Chairman advised that, having spoken to the Ranger at Nowton Park, there appeared to be unallocated trees presently within the Park which might prove a more suitable plan, rather than purchasing new trees and trying to find places to plant them within the village.

The Chairman reported that a proposal had been made to give every household 70 bulbs, which would then be planted around the village. Cllr. Wiseman offered to supply the contact details of a reputable supplier. **Action: Cllr. Wiseman**

The Chairman advised that as the ownership of Overway Meadow was in transition, there was no guarantee that the Jubilee celebrations could be held there. He asked, therefore, for the Village Hall to be reserved for the Jubilee week-end, in case an alternative venue was required. **Action: Cllr. Smith**

The Clerk reminded Councillors of the symbolic torch which would tour Suffolk (re email previously circulated) communities were being invited to nominate a worthy individual to carry the torch, transported by rickshaw; notification must be made by the 31st March. The Chairman and Cllr. Smith were hopeful to attract parishioners to form a Committee to organise the various Jubilee events; information would be circulated via the Newsletter, during the village walks, and first Friday of the month gatherings.

- 10. Litter and Dog Fouling Bins** – The Chairman explained that there was a lack of bins within Nowton Park in the area towards the village and, whilst Councillors had raised this issue before, the main reason given for refusal seemed to stem from the lack of adequate large vehicle access, in order to empty the bins. The Chairman had identified hard standing at Oakes gate as being suitable for vehicular access and had informally spoken to the home owner of the adjoining property, who had no objections to a bin being placed in the vicinity. Cllr. Soons advised that Nowton Park would need to be in

agreement. Cllr. Wiseman offered to speak with Mark Walsh of WSC and to arrange a meeting with the Parish Council. **Action: Cllr. Wiseman**

11. **Village Bus Service** – The Chairman asked Cllr. Soons if there was anything that could be done to increase the bus service running from Nowton to Bury St Edmunds and return, particularly at a time when people were being encouraged to reduce car use. Cllr. Soons responded by advising that it was a funding issue and a question of how many would actually use the bus service; she requested an email be sent to her and she would make inquiries with the relevant personnel. **Action: Clerk**

Discussion followed concerning taxi vouchers, which Councillors understood were age related and, if used, the free bus pass would have to be relinquished. The Chairman suggested parishioners be informed of this information and feedback gathered as to potential bus usage.

12. **Road Safety, Crime/Public Nuisance** – Councillors discussed the various road issues, including flooding and lack of white road markings at the Sicklesmere/Hawstead Road junction, which the Chairman would report on-line. **Action: Chairman**

Cllr. May reported possible illegal drug-related activity, on which the Police were keeping a close watch.

The Chairman reported that, following the community instigating help and support, a homeless person who had recently been living in a car in the Village Hall car park, had now moved to alternative accommodation.

Cooper Lane parking lines were discussed; it was agreed no action was required at present, but a watching brief would be kept.

Cllr. Smith mentioned that there appeared to be an increase in litter, particularly along Nowton Road; the Chairman suggested that, via the Newsletter, residents could be informed that WSC can provide free litter picking equipment to individuals.

Action: Chairman

The Chairman raised the question of grass verge cutting and asked whether the parish wished the verges to be left uncut. The Clerk reminded Councillors that WSC had an obligation, for safety reasons, to cut the roadside verges 1-2 times per year.

13. **Nowton Village Website/Facebook Group** – The Chairman reported that the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator was prominent within the Facebook Group and provided swift information, keeping everyone up to date.

14. **Correspondence** – Email correspondence received had been circulated by the Clerk to Councillors as and when received.

15. **Next meeting – Wednesday 6th April, 7.30 pm**

Future 2022 meetings: 18 May *Annual Parish Council meeting and Annual Assembly of the Parish*; 6 July; 21 September; 19 October; 7 December.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was closed at 8.50pm

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Signed

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Date