

NOWTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 5th October 2022

Present: Councillor - Mr Henry Hopking (Chairman)
Councillor - Ms Abigail Smith
Councillor - Miss Sarah Peacock
Parish Clerk - Mrs Pauline Stoddart

Prior to the meeting commencing, 10 Minute Public Forum – No members of the public were present. One minutes silence was observed prior to the meeting, as a mark of respect for the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and others in the village who had recently died.

Attendees: Cllr. Karen Soons joined the meeting at 19:50 during Item 8.1 after which the meeting was adjourned whilst Cllr. Soons presented her report, a copy of which had been circulated by the Clerk to Councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr. Soons highlighted several points within her report including: details of cost of living support which she suggested be shared via village websites and social media; solar panels and expressions of interest in same; the problem of illegal Blue Badge use, which Cllr. Soons recommended be reported to Trading Standards, if wrongful use was suspected. Trading Standards could also be contacted if a suspected scam email was received, in order to check its authenticity. Finally, Cllr. Soons reminded Councillors that she still had locality funding available and that any applications should ideally be submitted by the end of January.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Soons for her support at the meeting of the Licensing Committee concerning Nowton Park, which he had attended on behalf of the Parish Council to present its objections. Cllr. Soons asked the Chairman to keep her informed on this issue and left the meeting at 20:15.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – Cllrs. May and Flatt.
2. **Declarations of Interest** – none.
3. **Approval of the draft Minutes from the Parish Council meeting held 6th July 2022** – Approved as a true and accurate record. Proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by the Chairman and duly signed.
4. **Matters arising from the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting, not already on the agenda –**
 - 4.1 (11) The Clerk reported that the excess fee on the current insurance policy was £250; a new insurance policy was shortly due to take effect.
5. **Finance** – Current Account: £2,080.45; Business Account: £5,295.14.
Total: £7,375.59
 - 5.1 Cheque signatories, Bank Mandate – completion of this requirement was presently outstanding by Cllr. Smith. **Action: Cllr. Smith**
 - 5.2 Cheque (100408) had been signed between meetings, due to the urgent nature of the payment. The Chairman signed the remaining five approved cheques at the meeting and, due to no other signatory being present, the Clerk would obtain the second authorised signature at the earliest opportunity.

100408	Community Action Suffolk, Insurance	£248.23
100409	Nowton Village Hall, recycling	£345.10
100410	P. Stoddart, Clerk's Q2 salary	£585.40
100411	HMRC, Tax re Clerk's salary	£64.60
100412	P. Stoddart reimburse stationary & inks	£36.67
100413	Community Action Suffolk, website hosting	£60.00

- 5.3 SAAA External Audit – Councillors had previously been sent details of the option to ‘opt out’ of the SAAA central external auditor appointment arrangements. It was agreed to remain within the ‘opted-in’ central procurement regime managed by SAAA.
- 5.4 Internal Control Report, Q1 & Q2 – Cllr. Smith had completed the report and reported no issues. As agreed under 8.1 6th July meeting, Cllr. Peacock would complete the Internal Control Statements going forward.
- 5.5 Budget Review, Q1 & Q2 – Copies of the budget review were tabled, the Clerk advised that whilst the figures were presently £306.58 over budget, she anticipated that the actual expenditure would be below budget at year-end.

6. Insurance renewal and ratification of responses for submitted Risk Form – copies of the insurance risk form, completed and submitted by the Clerk, had been previously circulated to Councillors. No changes were requested.

7. Health & Safety Policy – copies of the H&S Policy, drafted by the Clerk, had been previously circulated to Councillors. No amendments were requested and the Policy was adopted and duly signed by the Chairman. An annual review would be carried out, in line with the Council’s other policies, at the December meeting. **Action: Clerk**

8. Planning –

8.1 DC/22/1523/FUL – Continued use of land for siting of mobile home for a period of three years, Apple Tree Farm, Low Green. After discussion, Councillors agreed that the response to West Suffolk Council should be ‘No Comment’
Action: Clerk

8.2 Applications under Delegated Powers – DC/22/1202/VAR (this application was later withdrawn). Council’s response ‘No Comment’

8.3 Alcohol Licensing Application, Nowton Park - the Chairman had previously advised Councillors of the outcome from the Licensing Committee meeting and went on to describe numerous incidents that he had personally witnessed at the event organised in Nowton Park. Many of these issues had formed the basis of the Council’s original objections and the Chairman advised that it was apparent during the course of the event that the assurances given by the organising company at the Licencing Committee meeting had not been met, and might well be considered in breach of licence.

After discussion it was agreed that when the monthly report from the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator had been received, the Chairman would draft a letter outlining the Council’s concerns to be sent to West Suffolk Council.
Action: Chairman/Clerk

9. Road Safety Crime/Public Nuisance – Cllr. Smith reported a rise in the theft of catalytic converters and the suggestion that spraying them might act as a deterrent, to some. There had been reports of motor bikes being particularly noisy in the village, although no reports to the Police had been made.

Cllr. Smith mentioned that road signs had fallen into a roadside ditch and the Chairman offered to report this, using the West Suffolk Council online reporting tool which he reminded Councillors to make full use of. **Action: Chairman**

10. **Update – The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Year and The Queen’s death** – the Chairman thanked Cllr. Smith for organising the floral tribute at the village bus stop, following the announcement of HM Queen Elizabeth’s death. The Clerk reported that she had carried out all the duties required by Parish Councils under Operation London Bridge and the Chairman advised that a letter of condolence on behalf of Nowton Parish Council had been sent to King Charles III.
11. **Nowton Village Website/Facebook Group** – the Chairman advised that the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator was prominent within the Facebook Group and provided timely and useful information.
12. **Correspondence** – the Clerk reported that email correspondence had been circulated to Councillors, as and when received. The Clerks & Councils Direct magazine would be passed to each Councillor for individual reading.
13. **2023 Meeting Dates** – the Clerk advised that the next election was due to be held on 4th May 2023, with this in mind the following dates were agreed, but were subject to change if necessary: 11 January; 22 February; 5 April; 17 May Annual Assembly of the Parish and Annual Parish Council meetings; 5 July; 13 September; 25 October; 6 December.

13.1 It was further agreed that the start of future Parish Council meetings would be brought forward to 7 p.m. to take effect from the next meeting.

14. **Next meeting – Wednesday 9th November, 7 p.m.**

Future 2022 meetings: 7 December.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was closed at 8.30 p.m.

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Signed

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Date