

# NOWTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 12<sup>th</sup> April 2023

**Present:** Councillor - Mr Henry Hopking (Chairman)  
Councillor - Mr David Flatt  
Councillor - Mr Michael May  
Councillor - Miss Sarah Peacock  
Parish Clerk - Mrs Pauline Stoddart

Prior to the meeting commencing, 10 Minute Public Forum – Three members of the public were present.

Two members of the public, the applicants associated with Item 10.2, outlined to Councillors the background of their rural business, on land which they had owned for over 17 years. Councillors had the opportunity to put questions to the applicants, one particular concern being as to the implications of losing an area of their agricultural barn, by changing to a residential dwelling, in the context of growing their business, and whether further agricultural buildings would then be required. The applicants assured Councillors that they did not require any more agricultural building space other than they presently had.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – Cllr. Smith.
2. **Declarations of Interest** – Chairman, Item 10.1 DC/23/0402/FUL, neighbour.
3. **Approval of the draft Minutes from the Parish Council meeting held 22 February 2023** – Having been circulated prior to the meeting, the minutes were approved as a true and accurate record. Proposed by the Cllr. Peacock, seconded by the Chairman; duly signed by the Chairman.
4. **Matters arising from the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting, not already on the agenda -**

No matters arising. The Chairman confirmed all Action Points from the last meeting (8.2, 9.1, 10.1, 10.4) had been completed.

5. **Public Forum** – In respect of Item 6: A member of the Nowton Road Community Speed Watch Campaign outlined the background of the formation of the group of volunteers, and the work they had carried out in gathering information on speeding vehicles, between the entrance of Nowton Park to the corner of Plovers Way; during one operation 187 vehicles were recorded travelling at speeds of between 36-61 mph. Bury Town Council was prepared to cover the costs of a Speed Indicator Device (SID) but required permission from Nowton Parish Council for the erection of a post within the Parish boundary on which to place the device. It was confirmed that Bury Town Council would maintain the post going forward and Nowton Parish Council would have no responsibility, financial or otherwise, for the post.

Three requests were made to the Parish Council:

- a) Approve the acceptance and position of a post (site map tabled) to monitor traffic going towards Bury St. Edmunds.
  - b) Advise who should submit the Site Suitability Checklist form (tabled) to SCC Highways Department.
  - c) Provide written evidence of resident's approval of the post.
6. **Request for siting of a post for mounting a Speed Indicator Display (SID)** – a request had been received for the siting of a post for mounting a SID, the property of Bury Town Council, within the Nowton parish boundary.

6.1 Site visit report by the Chairman and Cllr. Peacock – following a site visit, both the Chairman and Cllr. Peacock were comfortable with the proposed siting for the post. The problem of speeding vehicles through Nowton village was acknowledged and Councillors welcomed the possible deterrent a SID might provide. Proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr. Peacock. All in favour.

- a) The Parish Council supported the positioning of a post, the property of Bury Town Centre for the mounting of a SID, within the parish boundary of Nowton.
- b) After discussion, Councillors resolved they did not wish to take responsibility for submitting the Site Suitability Checklist to SCC Highways Department for approval; this would, therefore, be left to the Group making the request.
- c) Resident's approval would be sought at the Annual Assembly of the Parish, due to be held on the 17<sup>th</sup> May, after which written evidence of approval, or otherwise, would be given.

7. **Parish Council Elections** – The Clerk reported that the nomination stage had passed and three Councillors would again be standing, unopposed: Cllrs. Hopking, May and Smith.

Cllrs. Flatt and Peacock had not submitted nominations, thus their term of office would terminate on the 9<sup>th</sup> May. Cllr. Peacock had submitted a letter of resignation which was accepted by Council.

The Chairman thanked both Cllrs. Flatt and Peacock for their hard work and dedication during their tenure as Parish Councillors, which in the case of Cllr. Flatt was for over 21 years; his local and historical knowledge would be sadly missed.

The Chairman confirmed that after the 9<sup>th</sup> May there would be two vacant seats on the Parish Council and, whilst the Council was quorate with three Councillors, it was imperative for the smooth working of the Council to try and fill those seats by co-option. The Clerk was concerned that, due to personal circumstances, one Councillor might not be able to attend the Annual Parish Council meeting on the 17 May when the year-end accounts needed to be signed off. She suggested that a further possible date, 12 May, be considered as an alternative for this meeting. Cllr. Peacock offered to speak with the Councillor concerned about this suggestion. **Action: Cllr. Peacock**

8. **Annual Assembly of the Parish, 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023** – a draft Agenda had been previously circulated. No additional agenda items were requested.

9. **Finance** – Current Account: £1,311.14; Business Account: £4,304.83 Total: £5,615.97  
Taking into account the two unrepresented cheques below, year-end balance £4,965.97

100424 Clerk's salary, Q3 (31.3.2023)	£585.60
100425 HMRC Tax, Q3 (31.3.2023)	£64.40

9.1 Timetable for Financial Year-end 2023, previously circulated. Councillors noted the dates for the examination of the accounts by members of the public being from Monday 5 June to Friday 14 July. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return form (AGAR) together with all supporting accounting documentation and evidence was given to Cllr. Peacock to deliver to the Internal Auditor, in order for her to complete her report and return the paperwork to Council by the 12 May.

- 10. Planning** – To consider any Planning Applications to hand at the time of the meeting, including:
- 10.1 DC/23/0280/TPO – ratification of delegated powers – response, No Comment.  
DC/23/0402/FUL – no discussion due to cancelled meeting 5.4.2023 – response, No Comment.
- 10.2 DC/23/0336/FUL Apple Tree Farm, Low Green, partial change of use from agricultural use to residential dwelling. After discussion, the Council resolved to support this application. Proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr. May.  
**Action: Clerk**
- 10.3 DC/23/0458/FUL & DC/23/0459/LB – Nowton Lodge Farm, change of use and conversion of stable block to one dwelling with associated external alterations. After discussion, the Council resolved to support these applications. Proposed by Cllr. Flatt, seconded by Cllr. May. **Action: Clerk**
- 11. Road Safety Crime/Public Nuisance** – the Chairman advised that he had sent his Nowton Crime Data Analysis Report to the relevant authorities, as previously agreed by Council at the last meeting. The Chairman reiterated the importance of working with the Parks Department to maintain a good relationship; the Chairman advised that he has requested the Council be informed of any planned gatherings in Nowton Park of more than 500 people. All those sent the report have been invited to attend the Annual Assembly of the Parish on the 17 May.
- Pot holes – the Chairman advised that constant reporting was necessary.
- Ditch clearing (10.5 previous minutes) - work had been undertaken by Nowton Park staff on the ditches within Nowton Park itself, and confirmation that the work at Low Green would be undertaken had been received; this would entail a temporary road closure and confirmation of when this work would start was awaited.
- Cllr. Peacock advised of incidents in Coopers Lane; the Police were aware and investigating.
- Cllr. Flatt commented on a car, which had left the road and had, presumably, been travelling a high speed.
- 11.1 Flooding, Nowton Road – the Chairman reported on the four day closure of the road, near the entrance to Nowton Park, due to flooding. Councillors agreed that it was unacceptable that emergency vehicles could not use this road to get to the village, if needed. It was resolved that correspondence should be sent to SCC Highways, asking them for a definitive plan as to the work proposed to rectify this longstanding, frequent, and potentially dangerous problem.  
**Action: Clerk/Chairman**
- 12. King Charles III, Coronation Day 6<sup>th</sup> May** – no activities were planned at the moment.
- 13. Nowton Village Enhancement Project** – the Chairman confirmed that the grant of £250 had been received, to be used towards improving the area surrounding the bus shelter, and also the triangle of land around the village sign which was being eroded by vehicle damage. The Chairman proposed initially purchasing a quantity of top soil in order to enrich the soil in preparation of planting, followed by the purchase of wooden posts/reflectors to protect the triangle, although it was noted a street furniture Licence would need to be applied for and granted first. It was resolved that a quantity of top soil be purchased. Proposed by Cllr. Flatt, seconded by Cllr. Peacock. **Action: Chairman**

Cllr. May advised that he had a quantity of flowers/bulbs which could be re-planted later in the year, if needed. **Action: Cllr. May**

**14. Correspondence** – the Clerk reported that incoming email correspondence had been circulated to Councillors, as and when received.

14.1 The Clerk reminded Councillors to put the Clerk’s email address into their ‘safe’ box, to ensure Council emails did not go into their ‘junk’ boxes, and asked that Councillors respond to her emails, if requested to do so.

14.2 The Chairman highlighted the email notification via Cllr. Soons advising that the skirting of the footway between the Village Hall and Cooper Lane was due to be replaced, using the Highways Investment Fund.

**15. Next meeting** – ~~Annual Parish Council Meeting  
Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May, 7 p.m. (to be confirmed)~~  
*This meeting was cancelled as non-quorate,  
rescheduled for 24 May 2023.*

**Annual Assembly of the Parish  
Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May, 8 p.m.**

Further meetings 2023: 5 July; 13 September; 25 October; 6 December.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was closed at 8.37 p.m.

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Signed

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Date