

NOWTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 5th July 2023

Present: Councillor - Mr Henry Hopking (Chairman)
Councillor - Mr Michael May
Councillor - Ms Abigail Smith
Parish Clerk - Mrs Pauline Stoddart

Prior to the meeting commencing, 10 Minute Public Forum – Two members of the public were present and spoke during Item 8. Cllr. Karen Soons and a guest attended 7.30pm to 7.45pm.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – Cllr. O’Hara.
2. **Declarations of Interest** – None.
3. **Approval of the draft Minutes from the Annual Assembly of the Parish held 17th May 2023.** Having been circulated prior to the meeting, the minutes were approved as a true and accurate record. Proposed by Cllr. May, seconded by the Chairman; duly signed by the Chairman.
4. **Matters arising from the Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Parish, not already on the agenda** – No matters arising.
5. **Approval of the draft Minutes, Annual Parish Council meeting held 24th May 2023.** Having been circulated prior to the meeting, the minutes were approved as a true and accurate record. Proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr. May; duly signed by the Chairman.
6. **Matters arising from the Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting, not already on the agenda** – No matters arising.
7. **11 – Road Safety, Crime/Public Nuisance** – with the approval of the Council, item 11 was brought forward on the agenda; numbering of agenda items consequently adjusted.

Cllr. May reported that from a safety point it was good that the roadside verges had been cut. Cllr. Smith mentioned that visibility at the junction of the Sicklesmere Road remained very poor due to the overgrown roadside verge and there was also an ongoing problem of people putting up signs on the verge.

The Chairman suggested that there was a need for the Council to apply for permission to manage the roadside verges itself and this would be on the next meeting agenda for discussion. **Action: Clerk**

The Chairman had analysed the crime statistics attributed to Nowton, as provided by the SNWA BSE Area B Network Coordinator Andy Tucker, and gave the figures for February (1 x burglary) March (5 x violent/sexual) and April (1 x burglary in Nowton Park.) The Chairman explained that the five incidents which had been attributed to having taken place at Nowton Cricket Club in March may have been attributed to the wrong location. The Chairman advised that he would be keeping a note on where crimes were ‘tagged’ (place of crime) in the future. The Chairman concluded that violent/sexual crimes were a cause for concern nationally and explained the method that Suffolk Constabulary recorded and described incidents, which was different than in some other parts of the country.

- 11.1 Late night noise/Antisocial behaviour – The Chairman reported that since May he had received seven complaints from parishioners concerning loud music, late

night singing and general anti-social behaviour at Nowton Cricket Club. The Chairman explained that the Parish Council has no authority to enforce noise restrictions, however, West Suffolk Council had a duty to investigate all complaints of nuisance; two of the complainants had indicated they may take this route.

Whilst the Parish Council had no legal powers to intervene, it was keen that this sporting facility within the village, which was leased to NCC, was not lost to residents of Nowton due to the unacceptable behaviour of a few.

8. Public Forum – In respect of Item 11.1: The owners of the land leased to NCC advised that a meeting had been called for the following evening at 6pm in the Village Hall to meet with NCC representatives. They expressed their mortification that multiple complaints had been received by the Chairman and that the ‘soft approach’ to NCC had gone unheeded; the anti-social behaviour was totally unacceptable and would not be tolerated. The Chairman and Cllr. May would attend the forthcoming meeting as residents and in support of the landowners. The two members of the public left the meeting after Item 8.

9. Co-option to the Parish Council – one expression of interest had been received and it was hoped that an application would be forthcoming by the September meeting.

10. Finance – Current Account: £930.14; Business Account £7,815.91 Total: £8,746.05

Three cheques were approved and signed:

100427 I.C.O. annual subscription	£40.00
100428 Clerks salary, Apr-June Q1	£560.00
100429 Spoiled cheque	
100430 HMRC, Q1 Clerk’s salary	£90.00

The Chairman advised that he would be making some purchases in relation to the work for which a grant had been provided by WSC; the Clerk reminded that receipts must be obtained for all purchases.

11. Planning – no applications received.

12. Maintenance of Parish Council property – Cllr. May had kindly offered to undertake the refurbishment of the official Parish Council Notice Board positioned on the wall of the Village Hall. It was resolved that a budget of £50 be allocated towards materials required. Cllr. Smith advised that the outside of the Village Hall was shortly to be painted and that a black finish to the noticeboard would be in keeping with the re-decoration.

13. Correspondence - the Clerk reported that incoming email correspondence had been circulated to Councillors, as and when received. A copy of *Clerks & Councillors Direct* was given to the Chairman for circulation to all Councillors.

13.1 Council communication to Parishioners – the Chairman advised that he would post specific important notices, such as that for the Annual Assembly of the Parish, on the noticeboard at the Bus Shelter, in addition to the usual notification sites.

13.2 PSPO consultation – no further action required.

7.45pm - Cllr. Karen Soons and a guest arrived.

Cllr. Soons briefly went through points within her latest report, including: the successful work of Suffolk Trading Standards who were very active; Suffolk Fire Service offering to bring a fire engine to village Fetes, contact Cllr. Soons for details; help for Suffolk pre-payment meter customers whereby a package of £180,000 support has been created to help those struggling with their energy bills.

Cllr. Soons reported that historical documents held at The Hold Suffolk Archives are to be digitised and made available online, thanks to an agreement between SCC and Ancestry. The Chairman suggested it might be interesting to share this information with the village, perhaps to encourage a 'Community Archive Officer' post within Nowton.

The Chairman reiterated the appalling condition of some road surfaces within Nowton, highlighting particularly the road from the Sicklesmere junction, and also the lack of a good bus service and also why no EV charging points had been installed in Nowton Park when the parking area had been re-surfaced, despite WSC encouraging the installation of EV points.

Speeding - discussion followed with regards to the possibility of positioning a VAS; the Clerk was instructed to send an email to Cllr. Soons requesting a meeting with Matthew Fox in order to try and identify a suitable position for a VAS pole. **Action: Clerk**

Section 106 was also discussed in relation to the Rushbrook development and the upgrading of the road from Sicklesmere through the village as, whilst the development was outside the parish boundary, the development would directly impact on the village of Nowton and its residents. The Clerk confirmed that emails on behalf of the Parish Council had previously been sent with regards to this.

14. Next Meeting – Wednesday 13th September, 7pm, Nowton Village Hall.

Further meetings 2023: 25th October; 6th December.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was closed at 8.10 p.m.

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Signed

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Date