

NOWTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 1st November 2023

Present: Councillor - Mr Henry Hopking (Chairman)
Councillor - Mr Michael May
Councillor - Mr Ross O'Hara
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. In attendance, Cllr. Karen Soons

1. **Apologies for Absence** – none, all Councillors present.
2. **Declarations of Interest** – none.
3. **Approval of the draft Minutes from the previous meeting held on the 27 September 2023.** Having been circulated prior to the meeting, the minutes were approved as a true and accurate record. Proposed by Cllr. Smith seconded by Cllr. May; duly signed by the Chairman.
4. **Matters arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on the 27 September, not already on the agenda –**

4.1 (4.3) The Chairman confirmed that the Agenda for this meeting had been sent to the Manager of Nowton Court for display, in order that permanent residents could be made aware of meetings, should they wish to attend. Copies of approved minutes would also be sent, so that residents could be informed of the work being undertaken by the Parish Council.

4.2 (4.5 & 10) The Chairman advised he had posted on village Facebook to gain feedback from parishioners regarding the proposed VAS signs and the suggested Community Action Group. Whilst no offers of help had been forthcoming, parishioners he had spoken to were in favour of these initiatives.

4.3 (12) Cllr. Smith had looked at the Low Traffic Neighbourhoods scheme as a possible way of restricting HGV's and the expected increase in vehicles due to the future Abbots Vale development, using the road past the Village Hall and through the village as a 'rat run.' After discussion, it was agreed that more information was required about the scheme; the Chairman stressed that the Council must work with the community and local businesses very closely on any potential resolutions.

Action: All Councillors

4.4 (12) The Chairman highlighted the fact that Nowton Road remained clear, despite heavy rain and widespread flooding of roads in other areas of the County. He thanked Cllr. Soons for all her efforts in getting this long-standing problem resolved and asked that thanks also be passed to her team. The Chairman stressed that going forward it was vitally important to keep on top of the maintenance of the drains, now that they were in good working order.

The Chairman also thanked Cllr. Soons for organising and funding the three-way Traffic Survey which would be taking place between 27 November and 5 December; the ongoing support for Nowton from Cllr. Soons was very much appreciated. Cllr. Soons then left the meeting.

5. **Public Forum** – no members of the public present for this item.
6. **Co-option to the Parish Council** – no applications or expressions of interest had been received; this would remain a standing Agenda item until such time as the position was filled.
7. **Finance** - Current Account: £995.90; Business Account £6,436.85 Total: £7,432.75

Four cheques were approved and signed:

100440 Community Action Suffolk, website hosting	£60.00
100441 SALC Conference 29 Nov., H. Hopking	£18.00
100442 CAS, Insurance (additional payment)	£18.88
100443 H. Hopking, plants (WSC grant)	£76.25

- 7.1 Q2 Internal Control Report – Cllr. O’Hara had completed his report and raised no issues.
- 7.2 Q2 Budget Review, RFO – the Clerk tabled the Q2 figures of funds spent to the end of September, which she reported showed under budget, as expected.

8. **Planning** – No planning applications had been received between meetings.
9. **Traffic Survey** – The three-way traffic survey, funded by the Highways budget of Cllr. Soons, would be conducted between 27 November and 5 December.
10. **Permissive Footpaths** – Cllr. O’Hara advised that a path used by parishioners from Nowton Park to Low Green had recently been taped out of bounds due to a fallen tree; this had since been cleared.
11. **SCC Self-Help Scheme for Town & Parish Councils** – The Chairman reported that he had posted on the village Facebook, receiving no response for volunteers. Parishioners he had spoken to were in favour of the scheme, but did not volunteer.

After discussion, it was **agreed** that the Chairman and Cllr. O’Hara would undertake training offered by Suffolk County Council in order to become ‘lead’ volunteers. The relevant application form would be completed and submitted. **Action: Clerk/Chairman**

Cllr. Smith kindly offered to store any equipment necessary for the scheme in the Village Hall.

12. **Emergency Plan and Information Leaflets** – The amended Emergency and Information leaflets were approved; the Chairman would double-check one entry and revert to the Clerk. **Action: Chairman**

A small printed quantity of the updated two leaflets, together with a Skills & Equipment questionnaire and Consent Form, would be printed and given to each Councillor at the next meeting, in order that they could be distributed to any new parishioners, as necessary. **Action: Clerk/Councillors**

13. **Review of Polling Districts, consultation** – Councillors noted that an assessment of the Village Hall to consider aspects in relation to accessibility had been undertaken. The Chairman commented that it would be a loss and inconvenience to parishioners to lose the Polling Station in the Village Hall. Cllr. Smith, Chair of the Village Hall Committee, advised she would liaise with WSC as to the requirements, particularly with regards to a hand-rail and outside lighting, and would revert back to Council. **Action: Cllr. Smith**

- 14. **Road Safety, Crime/Public Nuisance** – Cllr. May reported speeding cars and motor bikes along Park Lane, late at night and early in the morning, plus a person assumed to be sleeping rough, who had now moved on. Cllr. Smith reported an abandoned car in Cooper Lane; one of the residents of Cooper Lane will be contacting the Police about this. Cllr. Smith also commented on the need for additional parking spaces for residents. The Chairman advised that the crime statistics for September had just been published and were at their lowest for a long time; there were no crimes reported in Nowton.
- 15. **Correspondence** – Clerks & Councils Direct magazine was given to the Chairman for onwards circulation to all Councillors, to read at their leisure. All email correspondence had been circulated to Councillors as and when received by the Clerk.
- 16. **Date of next meeting – Wednesday 6th December 2023**

The Clerk reminded Councillors the December meeting would include the drafting of the 2024-2025 Precept, and setting the dates for Parish Council meetings in 2024.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was closed at 7.50 p.m.

Original signed

 Signed

Original dated 6.12.2023

 Date