

# NOWTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016  
at 7.30 p.m. in Nowton Village Hall, Nowton

**Present:** Councillor - Mrs Carol Perry (Chairman)  
Councillor - Mr David Flatt  
Councillor - Mr Jonathan Green  
Councillor - Mr Mike May  
Parish Clerk - Mrs Pauline Stoddart

Prior to the meeting: 10 Minute Opportunity of Public Forum – no members of the public were present.

The Chairman welcomed Jonathan Green to his first Parish Council meeting.

1. **Apologies for absence** – Councillor Forrow.
2. **Declaration of co-opted Parish Councillor** – the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Parish Councillor was signed by Jonathan Green and duly countersigned by the Clerk. The Register of Interests form was given to Councillor Green to complete and return to the Clerk by the next meeting.
3. **Declarations of Interest** – The Chairman, Item 5, re Village Hall.
4. **Approval of the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 9<sup>th</sup> December 2015** – a draft copy of the Minutes had been previously circulated and was taken as read. The Chairman noticed the date of the meeting was given as 8<sup>th</sup>, rather than the 9<sup>th</sup>, December; it was agreed this error be amended and a correct copy filed. Proposed by Councillor May, seconded by Councillor Flatt as an otherwise true and accurate record, duly signed by the Chairman.
  - 4.1 Matters arising from the Minutes of 9<sup>th</sup> December 2015 –
    - (8.3) The Clerk advised that she was yet to receive a response regarding the property that Councillor Flatt believed to be condemned.
    - (8.4) Councillor Flatt had spoken to the property owner, whom he advised had seemed unconcerned, regarding the overhanging hedge. As there was no immediate danger to either pedestrians or traffic, Councillors agreed that the matter only needed to be noted.
    - (4.1) No response had been received from Highways regarding Fox and Pin Lane, on which work had been promised this financial year.
    - (4.2) The Chairman reported on responses in the public domain concerning the Nowton Court planning application.
5. **Finance – including balances of Accounts and approval of any invoices for payment** -  
Current Account: £1,355.62 Deposit Account: £3,824.92 = £5,180.54.  
The following invoice was approved for payment:  
100273 SEBC uncontested election expenses £21.34

Councillor Flatt raised the issue of using reserves, or Section 137 grants, for a project within the village and suggested that the Alms Houses would benefit from dedicated parking space. After discussion, it was agreed that this idea would be looked into, but it was felt there was insufficient time to make a decision at this meeting as there were various issues concerning ownership, etc. that would need to be investigated.

The Chairman declared an interest re the Village Hall.

5.1 Setting of the 2016-2017 Precept – the Clerk had previously circulated a working paper giving the budget and actual figures for expenditure over the past four years. Councillors worked through the paper agreeing the amounts to be allocated for the various headings for the 2016-2017 budgets. No significant changes were made from the previous year, and the Precept figure to be requested was agreed at £2,273.

Whilst this sum is significantly bigger than last year's Precept figure (£740) it should be noted that the Parish Council used £2,000 from its reserves last year to reduce the Precept figure. With the loss of the Parish Revenue Support Grant in 2017-2018, Councillors thought it prudent not to use reserves this year.

**6. Planning – Planning Applications to hand at the time of the meeting:  
DC/15/2483/OUT**

6.1 Outline Planning Application (Means of Access) to be considered on to Rougham Hill and Sicklesmere Road to include up to 1250 dwellings (use Class C3); local centre comprising retail floor space (A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5) a community hall (D2), land for a primary School (D1), and car parking; a relief road, vehicular access and associated works including bridge over the river Lark; sustainable transport links: open space (including children's play areas): sustainable drainage (SuDS): sports playing fields: allotments and associated ancillary works. Location: Land South Rougham Hill, Rougham Hill Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. Applicant: Hopkins Homes Ltd and Pigeon (Bury East) Ltd.

The Chairman outlined the previous meetings attended concerning this development and Councillors studied the documentation provided by SEBC. Councillors discussed the proposal at great length and, whilst they understood the need to build houses, they had concerns on aspects of this development and considered the proposed site not suitable for such a large development, particularly given its proximity to the river Lard and flood plains, together with the already inadequate and overstretched transport links within the area.

After deliberation, Councillors unanimously agreed to OBJECT to the above application and made the following observations, in no particular order listed below:

- a) Southgate and Cullum Road roundabouts are already congested at peak times; the addition of at least 1,000 vehicles from the proposed development can only add to this problem.
- b) The road through Nowton is already used as a short cut from the Sicklesmere Road; the volume of vehicles using this to avoid the congestion of the Sicklesmere Road towards Bury St Edmunds will undoubtedly increase, resulting in an increased danger for pedestrians walking along the Bury Road, which has no pavement. Sadly, there has already been one recent fatality.
- c) There are no parking facilities on the Nowton side of Bury St Edmunds, therefore all traffic has to continue to the Southgate and Cullum Road roundabouts in order to park in Bury St Edmunds.
- d) The housing development and infrastructure would cause a loss of designated 'special interest' landscape.
- e) The hospital and healthcare in Bury St Edmunds is already stretched; no mention is made of surgery or healthcare facilities within the development to cope with the influx of residents.
- f) The risk of flooding – Councillors understand that no houses will be built on the flood plains, although recreational facilities will be. Given the recent appalling flooding in the country this is one issue foremost in Councillors minds.

- g) Councillors queried whether the size of the Primary School would be adequate for the estimated number of children living within the development.
- h) Councillors were concerned as to the management of construction traffic and the effect on the local area and residents.
- i) There was a need for affordable housing in the area and Councillors queried whether this was adequately catered for within the development. They were also concerned as to the lack of single storey homes, or sheltered accommodation, or facilities for care needs, these elements seemed to be missing from the proposals and yet it is estimated that in 2030, 40% of the population will be aged over 65.

The Clerk was instructed to respond to SEBC, stating Nowton Parish Council's objection to the Planning Application and giving the above observations.

**7. Annual Reviews -**

7.1 Annual Risk Assessment of Financial Management - Copies of the Risk Assessment of Financial Management had previously been circulated. These were taken as read and Councillors were satisfied with the safeguards already in place.

7.2 Annual Review of the effectiveness and systems of Internal Audit - Copies of the Systems of Internal Audit had previously been circulated. These were taken as read and Councillors were satisfied with the safeguards already in place.

7.3 Annual Review of work performed by Internal Auditor - Copies of the paper describing the work performed by the Internal Auditor had been previously circulated. These were taken as read and Councillors were satisfied that the internal auditor was satisfactorily conducting the internal audit.

7.4 Annual appraisal of Clerk and Salary, review of Contract of Employment - Councillors agreed that the Clerk had conducted her work efficiently during the past year.

7.5 Review of Standing Orders/Statement of Intent - the Statement of intent on internal control had been previously circulated. This was taken as read and Councillors were of the opinion that no changes were necessary.

**8. Road Safety/Crime/Public Nuisances** – Councillor May reported flooding at the Nowton Park entrance, fly tipping at the Pump Station and tree roots through the tarmac in Fox and Pin Lane (4.1 above). No crimes had been reported in Nowton.

**9. Correspondence – to include any correspondence to hand at the time of the Meeting** – the Clerk reported that there had been no correspondence to bring to the attention of Councillors and outlined the details of the little that had been received, namely from Age Suffolk UK and Suffolk Police 'All Change for Suffolk' information booklet; the Chairman gave some facts from the document.

9.1 The Chairman advised correspondence had been received from Mr Hopking, asking the Council to consider celebrating The Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday by joining a countrywide litter campaign. This subject would be added to the next meeting's agenda.

**10. Dates of Next Meeting – Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 7.30 p.m.**

Dates for 2016: 13 April, 25 May (APM), 6 July, 21 September, 26 October, 7 December.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was closed at 8.55 p.m.

Chairman: ..... Date: .....