

NOWTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 5th December 2017
At 7.30 p.m. in Nowton Village Hall, Nowton

Present: Councillor - Mrs Carol Perry (Chairman)
Councillor - Mrs Renee Farrow
Councillor - Mr David Flatt
Councillor - Mr Mike May
Parish Clerk - Mrs Pauline Stoddart

1. **Apologies for Absence** – Councillor Jon Green.
2. **Declarations of Interest** – none.
3. **Approval of the draft Minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on the 1st November 2017** – approved as a true and accurate record. Proposed by Councillor May, Seconded by Councillor Farrow and duly signed by the Chairman.
4. **Matters arising from the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 1st November, not already included on the Agenda.**

4.1 The Chairman reported that the Highways Department had been unable to tell her whether or not the road inspection had been carried out; she would follow this up.

5. **Annual Risk Assessment of Financial Management** - copies of the risk assessment had been previously circulated and were taken as read. Councillors were of the opinion that no changes were required and they were satisfied with the safeguards already in place.
6. **Annual Review of the effectiveness and systems of Internal Audit** – copies of the systems of internal audit had been previously circulated and were taken as read. After discussion, Councillors were of the opinion that no changes were required and they were satisfied with the safeguards already in place.
7. **Annual Review of work performed by Internal Auditor** – Copies of the paper describing the work performed by the Internal Auditor had been previously circulated and were taken as read. Councillors were satisfied that the internal auditor was satisfactorily conducting the internal audit.
8. **Annual Appraisal of Clerk and Salary, review of Contract of Employment** – The Chairman thanked the Clerk for her request that no increase in salary be applied. Councillors agreed that the Clerk had conducted her work efficiently during the past year.
9. **Statement of intent on internal control** – the statement had been previously circulated and was taken as read. Councillors were of the opinion that no changes were necessary.

10. Annual Verification of Assets Register – the list of assets that had been previously circulated was agreed as an accurate record of the Assets of Nowton Parish Council and insurance valuations were approved.

11. Finance – Current Account: £1,363.49; Savings Account: £3,827.25 = £5,190.74

11.1 Three cheques were approved for payment and signed:

100309	HMRC, re Clerk's quarterly salary	£60.00
100310	Clerk's Salary Oct-Dec	240.00
100311	Village Hall, recycling payment	221.43

11.2 Setting of the 2018-2019 Precept – a statement of the previous four year's budget and actual spend under crucial headings had been previously circulated. Councillors went through the working paper to set a budget for 2018-2019; there were no significant increases. Total Precept to be submitted before 26/1/2018 = £2,684.00.

12. Planning –DC/17/2051/ADV, the Barn, Low Green Nowton IP29 5ND – application for advertisement consent: (i) 1 x non-illuminated lettering sign; (ii) 1 x non-illuminated company logo sign; (iii) 1 x non-illuminated fascia sign (retrospective).

After discussion Councillors were in agreement to **support** this application. However, Councillors were also of the opinion that they would not like to see any additional signs, other than for this application.

13. Road Safety Crime/Public Nuisance – whilst a few potholes had been filled, road surfaces continued to be a problem in parts of Nowton. The Chairman reported there had been some fly tipping, which SEBC had collected quickly. Councillor May reported that the recent Neighbourhood Watch meeting had been poorly attended and he advocated going through Trading Standards, who were very helpful in certain situations, such as rogue door-step callers, rather than the Police.

Councillor May mentioned the number of cyclists, many of which frequent the cycling café in Hawstead, that ride three-abreast on the roads and also whether cyclists in particular have complaints concerning the potholes. It was suggested that it might be useful to invite representatives of the cycling café to a future Parish Council meeting, to discuss road safety, road surfaces, etc.

8.05 pm Councillor Karen Soons arrived and the meeting was adjourned for her report:

Councillor Soons highlighted points from her November 2017 Monthly Parish Newsletter, these included Budget proposals including an option to increase the basic rate of Council Tax by 1.99% following a seven-year freeze. Councillor Soons outlined proposed changes to the Budget and reported that £27M further savings were needed to balance the Budget. Other matters highlighted included the launch of a new social prescribing pilot scheme to connect rural communities; Suffolk's young people being encouraged to get involved with Suffolk's Youth Parliament; and SCC's Children's Services has been rated 'Good' in all areas following an Ofsted pilot inspection.

Discussion took place concerning potholes and the promised inspection of the roads, which Councillor Soons advised had been carried out. She reported that Highways were trying to ring-fence funds in order to resurface roads; when asked how much of the Highways budget was being paid out in compensation due to damage to vehicles from potholes, Councillor Soons replied that most claims were met by insurance, and advised complainants to take photos and contact Customer Rights.

The Chairman queried whether the 'children crossing' signs had been approved and Councillor Soons said she would inquire, as no response had yet been received.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Soons for her report, who then left the meeting.

14. Correspondence – Letter from Jo Churchill MP concerning events to take place next 11th November; this would be brought forward to the next meeting for discussion.

15. Next Meeting – Wednesday 10th January 2018, 7.30 p.m.

Future 2018 meetings: 28 February; 11 April; 23 May (Annual Parish meeting); 11 July; 19 September; 24 October; 5 December. All meetings are subject to change.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.25 p.m.