

Felsham Parish Council

Draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 20th July 2021 held in the Village Hall at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Simon Garrod (Chair), Cllr David Simpson, Cllr Ken Sparkes, Cllr Paul Kearney,
Cllr Joan Llewellyn
Mark Bloomfield (Clerk & RFO) County & District Cllr Penny Otton
2 invited members of the public

- 2021/0039 **Welcome and to receive apologies** – Cllr Garrod welcomed all to the meeting & accepted apologies from Cllr Nunn & Cllr Tavernor
- 2021/0040 **Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensation** – No interests were declared.
- 2021/0041 **Minutes of Parish Council Meeting** – The minutes from the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on 15th June 2021 were considered and approved. Cllr Simpson proposed, Cllr Kearney seconded, all in favour (resolution passed). The minutes were signed by Cllr Garrod as a true record.
- 2021/0042 **County & District Councillor Otton** – Cllr Otton gave her report to the Parish Council Meeting, and forms part of these minutes. Cllr Otton reported that she had had a meeting with Lee Crowdell (MSDC Housing) on 12th July 21 to consider future possible parking solutions within the village especially around The Orchard. Cllr Otton also updated that she had confirmed that the planning application DC/21/02924 – Land to the rear of the Six Bells Public House had been referred to the Planning Committee. Cllr Otton was asked to check what the deadline for comments is as this had been changed from the original deadline (subsequently confirmed as the 4th August).
- 2021/0028 **Public Participation** – It was agreed by all members to bring forward items 2021/0053
2021/0053 & 2021/0054 to this part of the agenda having invited Ria Crosbie (RC) & Andrew
2021/0054 Conquest (AC) to the meeting to discuss these items.

Cllr Kearney began by stressing the need for this to be the start of discussions around a long-term solution for parking within the village and to take the opportunity during these discussions to consider the future need for charging points within the village which will undoubtedly become more necessary with time.

The planned extension to the Village Hall to house the new community shop and the reconfiguration of the car park may provide an opportunity for electrical charging points available for public use. When asked, AC confirmed that he had preliminary discussions with the architects regarding charging points and that they may be able to draw on government grant funding to assist in providing this facility.

Cllr Kearney commented that over 40 properties had no driveways or possible access to home charging points and that would inevitably drive demand for publically accessible charging points.

It was pointed out too by Cllr Kearney that a potential problem with public charging points would be that cars will be abandoned whilst connected, preventing others from using the points.

Parking in General – AC explained that ultimately the Village Hall car park was for patrons of the village hall. As a concession, on application, local residents are allowed to use the car park unless there is an event in the hall when maximum available parking needs to be provided. AC also confirmed that there will be a slight increase in parking capacity after the extension with an over-flow/grasscrete section.

Cllr Simpson pointed out that this issue was likely to get worse with time with multiple vehicles per household still increasing.

AC stressed his view that it isn't the intention of the Village Hall Management Committee to inhibit the use of the car park and seeks to encourage visitors to the village to use the car park and enjoy the footpaths & other facilities around the village.

Cllr Kearney pointed out that in view of discussions that Cllr Otten was having with MSDC Housing officers regarding parking provision, that communication between all parties was to be maintained.

Cllr Garrod pointed out that there may be areas within the village suitable for the use of parking & possible electrical charging points.

Cllr Kearney suggested that the planned 'Village Walk' by councillors should include consideration of possible parking/electrical charging point locations.

Clerk – asked to investigate possible grant funding available for schemes from MSDC/SCC & National Government.

Public Forum – Andrew Conquest explained that he was investigating the possibility of obtaining a Public Works Loan to help fund the extension to the Village Hall for the new shop. The possible loan amount sought could be in the region of £100k - £130k. AC has been in discussions with the Plunkett Foundation for guidance. The clerk informed the council of initial guidance from SALC and made the Parish Council aware of the following:

- As a 'proper authority', the Parish Council would have to apply for the loan
- Maximum term for any loan would be 50 years
- There would need to be a clear demonstration of how the loan would be repaid
- The Parish Council would have to demonstrate where it has shown challenge & prudence
- Detailed engagement/consultation plans with the electorate (especially if the precept was to be used in any way to help re-pay some/all of the loan)
- Approval to borrow money would come from the Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government

The Clerk was asked to investigate further including other grant options. Cllr Otten also offered to make an approach to MSDC regarding possible funding support.

2021/0044

Clerks Report –

- Cllr Llewellyn's Register of Interest Forms have been sent to the Returning Officer at MSDC.
- All AGAR forms & supporting documentation are posted on the Parish Council website for public access including the receipt of data from the External Auditor (PKF Littlejohn). Any issues arising from the external audit review will be sent to the Parish Council by the end August 21.
- The Clerk has contacted Hawthorn Leisure regarding the damaged caused to the wall of the car park at The Six Bells Public House (contact through messaging service on Hawthorne Leisure's website on 1st July, 7th July & 19th July 2021). Mention was made during these messages also concerning the ivy that is climbing the stable walls & roof. Also, included in the message of 7th July was an enquiry regarding the status of the car park under the criteria of the Asset of Community Value and it's possible implications for the planning application DC/21/02924.

- The Parish Council has received a donation of £50 from Mrs Barbara Williams after her husband was saved by the use of the defibrillator located at the Village Hall. The Clerk suggested, and it was agreed, to send a letter of thanks to Mrs Williams.
- The Clerk is booked onto a course for new clerks on 6th September 21.

2021/0045

Planning:

- i.
- a. Applications received - none
- ii. To note any decisions made by MSDC – Permission Granted by MSDC for Reserved Matters/Conditions for Maiden Hall application DC/21/01329
- iii. Update on application DC/21/02924 – Clerk confirmed that comments were still being registered on the planning portal at MSDC as of 14th July 21. Cllr Otten confirmed that the application is to be forwarded on to the planning committee. It was noted that several residents of Felsham had made comments/objections via the MSDC planning portal.

2021/0046

Finance:

- a. RFO's Report – July 21 was approved – proposed by Cllr Garrod, seconded by Cllr Simpson – all in favour – RESOLUTION PASSED
- b. Payment Authorisation – the following payments were authorised for July 21: Clerk Salary, Top Garden Services - £192.00 & HMRC payment for Q1 - £141.60 – proposed by Cllr Garrod, seconded by Cllr Kearney, all in favour – RESOLUTION PASSED.
- c. Payment authorisation for August (in the absence of a parish council meeting) – it was agreed that the Clerk's salary, Top Garden Services & any other clearly budgeted expenditure can be made in August – proposed by Cllr Garrod, seconded by Cllr Kearney, all in favour – RESOLUTION PASSED.

Other Notes: A signatory needs to pursue the disputed payments made by direct debit on the account ending X967. Clerk to send Cllr Garrod the relevant information for this. A new card reader has been received allowing a resumption in on-line banking. The Clerk met with the Business Banking Customer Services Manager at Lloyds Bank, Bury St. Edmunds on 20th July 21 to arrange for papers to update mandates (including Cllr Llewellyn, update admin details inc. correspondence address, telephone numbers etc.) & to follow up on disputed transactions. Clerk to defer until September meeting. The RFO Report for September and all future months will include a VAT breakdown.

2021/0047

Village Maintenance:

- a. Report from Tree Officer – no report
- b. Matters reported - none

2021/0048

Conservation Area:

- a. Report from Conservation Officer – nothing additional to report since the 'hole in the wall' at the Six Bells although there is additional damage to the wall
- b. Matters reported – Clerk to continue to attempt to make contact with Hawthorn Leisure and also the Heritage Officer at MSDC considering the 'wall' is listed.

2021/0049

Footpaths:

- a. Report from Footpath Officer – Cllr Nunn sent her report stating that the length of grass is still a concern. Cllr Nunn has suggested that we look into obtaining additional Public Footpath signs if we do not already have some spares in the parish.
- b. Matters reported – as detailed above

- 2021/0050 **Correspondence –**
The Clerk updated the Parish Council on further communications with a resident regarding the location of a dog bin. The Clerk explained that the following information has been obtained:
- Felsham Parish Council owns the bin
 - MSDC empties the bin & makes an annual charge to the parish council for this service
 - It is believed, but unconfirmed, that the land on which the bin is located belongs to Suffolk County Council.
 - As requested by Suffolk Highways – this issue has twice been reported using the Suffolk Highways on-line reporting tool for non-emergency highways issues.
 - Still awaiting response (as at 20th July 21)
- It was agreed that the Clerk should contact the Footpath Officer at Suffolk County Council and also write to the owners of the adjacent farmland to explain the current situation.
- 2021/0051 **Housing Needs Survey** – deferred until September 21. It has been arranged that a 'Walk 'Round' of councillors will take place on Tuesday 17th August 2021 at 7pm to investigate possible locations for potential future development.
- 2021/0052 **Village Sign – Update** – no update – deferred until September 21. During the scheduled councillor 'Walk Round' on 17th August 21, this will be discussed and a plan will be put together.
- 2021/0053 & 2021/0054 **Parking Provision Strategy & Provision of Electrical Charging Points** - Addressed during Public Forum (2021/0043)
- 2021/0038 **Other Matters brought to the attention of the council** – Cllr Otten asked whether any plans had been made or suggested for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee for 2022. It was agreed that it will be an agenda item in September.

Next meeting of the Parish Council – Tuesday 21st September 2021 in the Village Hall

The meeting was closed by the Cllr Garrod at 8.36pm

Item 2021/0058 – Minutes of Parish Council Meeting, 20th July 21 Approved

Signed:

(Chair) Cllr Simon Garrod

Date: 21st September 2021.



JULY REPORT 2021

Both Councils have started to hold in person meetings but with social distancing and strict COVID rules in the council offices.

There has been a small rise in infections in Mid Suffolk and testing has taken place in various locations.

EDUCATION SCRUTINY: the first took place last week and I have asked that the home to school transport policy is first on the agenda. Also, to receive the report form the independent review of the service for children with special needs.

STREET LIGHTING: The council has joined with a new company; Bouygues Energies & Service to update the LED street lights across the county, to reduce light pollution and decrease energy use.

VERGE CUTTING: I know this is a problem at the moment, the schedule is available online, but if there are areas of extreme danger please report them.

MID SUFFOLK

RATTLESDEN GLIDING CLUB; they will be holding an open day on 30th August. we continue to have regular liaison meeting to monitor activities.

MEETING WITH LEE CROWDELL; MSDC HOUSING; I had a meeting with Lee on 12th July to look at any parking problems or solutions. He was also interested to see the old wardens office unused and the state of the vegetation there which he will get cut.

He will get back to me with any thoughts on the parking , he also could see the potential of the 2 areas for additional council properties!

SIX BELLS SITE; I have put in the call-in but still have not been told the date of the committee meeting.