

Felsham Parish Council

Draft Minutes of the ANNUAL MEETING of FELSHAM PARISH COUNCIL held on 17th May 2022 following the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING in the Village Hall

Present: Cllr Simon Garrod (Chair), Cllr David Simpson, Cllr Ken Sparkes, Cllr Paul Kearney,
In attendance: Isabelle Reece (Clerk & RFO)
Apologies: Cllr Hayley Nunn, Cllr Mark Tavernor , SCC & MSDC Cllr Penny Otton

2022/001 Nominations and election of Chair

Proposed by Cllr Simpson & seconded by Cllr Sparkes, Cllr Garrod was elected Chairman

2022/002 Acceptance of office of new Chair

Cllr Garrod Accepted to continue in the Office of Chairman

2022/003 Nominations and election of Vice Chair

Proposed by Cllr Sparkes & seconded by Cllr Kearney, Cllr Nunn was elected as Vice-Chairman

2022/004 To receive apologies – Cllr Garrod welcomed all to the meeting and received apologies from Cllrs Nunn, Tavernor & SCC & MSDC Cllr Otton.

2022/005 Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensation – No interests were declared & there were no requests for dispensation.

2022/006 Minutes of Parish Council Meeting – The minutes from the Meeting of the Parish Council on 19th April 2022 were considered and approved. Cllr Simpson proposed, Cllr Sparkes seconded, all in favour (resolution passed). The minutes were signed by Cllr Garrod as a true record.

2022/007 County & District Councillor Otton – Cllr Otton's report to the Parish Council had been received & was noted – and forms part of these minutes.

2022/008 Public Participation – There was none.

2022/009 Clerk's Report – The clerk's contract was formalized; there was a bank mandate naming her as delegate to be signed; she still has received no contact from the previous Clerk and no access to bank or HMRC accounts. Further updating of the website has been accomplished; there is still work to do. Contacts were suggested who may be able to assist and Cllr Garrod suggested that it may be possible to start afresh with HMRC.

2022/010 To appoint Officers including:

a. Conservation Officer

Proposed by Cllr Garrod, seconded by Cllr Kearney Cllr Simpson was appointed Conservation Officer

b. Footpath Officer

Proposed by Cllr Garrod, seconded by Cllr Kearney, Cllr Nunn was appointed Footpath Officer

c. Tree Officer

Proposed by Cllr Garrod, seconded by Cllr Sparkes, Cllr Tavernor was appointed Tree Officer

2022/011 To appoint representatives to outside bodies, including:

a. Village Hall Committee

Proposed by Cllr Garrod, seconded by Cllr Sparkes, Cllr Simpson was appointed Representative to the Village Hall Committee

b. Playing field Committee

Proposed by Cllr Garrod, seconded by Cllr Sparkes, Cllr Kearney was appointed Representative to the Playing Field Committee

c. Felsham Charity Trustees

Proposed by Cllr Garrod, seconded by Cllr Simpson, Cllr Sparkes was appointed representative to the Felsham Charity Trustees

[13. To approve the Meeting Schedule for 2022/2023]

This item was erroneously misplaced in the Agenda by the Clerk: the Meeting Schedule for 2022/2023 was approved

2022/012 Planning:

a. To consider applications received:

- i **Appeal Reference APP/W3520/W/21/3289197** – Erection of 2 detached dwellings, associated parking & landscaping - Land rear of Six Bells: the Council agreed to reiterate its objection to the application and the Clerk was instructed to consult Cllr Nunn, who was familiar with the case, to formulate an appropriate response

b. To note any decisions made by MSDC

No decisions had been received

2022/013 Financial Matters and Audit

a. To review & approve External Audit Exemption Certificate 2021/2

b. To review & approve the Annual Governance Statement in the Annual Return 2021/2

c. To review & approve the Annual Accounts 2021/2

d. To review and approve accounting statements in the annual return 2021/2

e. To approve the RFO's Finance report for May 2022

The above items were of necessity deferred until the June meeting. The Clerk apologised that she had not been able to complete the documents; having found that the Accounts had not been as fully and comprehensively up-to-date as previously thought

f. To authorise payments as appropriate including:

There were no payments to authorize

g. To review Asset Register and insurance provision.

The Asset Register (last amended in 2019) is to be updated to include the new VAS; the Clerk had previously reported to Cllr Garrod that the Insurance renewal date was nearer than anticipated Preliminary enquiries had been made & Cllr Garrod instructed the Clerk to consult Cllr Nunn for assistance. Given the urgency of the need to ensure continuity of provision the Clerk would pursue within normally agreed parameters.

2022/014 Village Maintenance:

a. Report from Tree Officer – nothing to report

b. Matters reported – the owner of the property, reported at the last meeting, where overhanging bushes were becoming problematic had been contacted and had undertaken to have them cut back

2022/015 Conservation Area:

a. Report from Conservation Officer – nothing to report.

b. Matters reported – Cllr Kearney reported that the state of the Listed Wall attached to the Six Bells was becoming increasingly precarious; and that an area of 'ferral' land adjacent to a property in Meadow Close was becoming dangerously overgrown, encroaching on and causing a tripping hazard on the footpath.

2022/016 Footpaths:

a. Report from Footpath Officer – SCC's first cut of the year had been made; those walked were satisfactory

b. Matters reported – nothing reported

2022/017 Correspondence

The Clerk requested and received clarification and guidance on what could be shared with correspondents

2022/018 Local Housing Needs Survey – Nothing had been heard from the CAS contact Sunila Osborn; Cllrs Simpson, Sparkes & Nunn (the original Working Group) to liaise and pursue progress

2022/019 Other Matters brought to the attention of the council – The Late Cllr Williams' name is still in some places on the Parish Website; other areas of the website need updating: Clerk to liaise with Cllr Simpson. Parish Council Appointment to Felsham Charitable Trust to be on June Agenda. Work is needed to take forward the Village Sign project, including aspects of the design; plinth specifications; the Planning Application and deciding on the contractor

The meeting was closed by Cllr Garrod at 9.15pm

Signed _____ Chairman Dated _____

Councillor Penny Otton Parish Report - MAY (sic) 2022

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COVID-19

Latest SCC information is available here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Latest Government advice is available here: www.gov.uk/coronavirus

FESTIVAL OF SUFFOLK TORCH RELAY; this will be going around the whole of Suffolk starting on 13TH May and in many villages, residents will be invited to take part and to cheer on all who pass through their village. This will end on 1st June at the Suffolk Show Ground where the big Platinum Jubilee Pageant will take place

Cabinet 1st March

The Cabinet met to vote on the disapproval of the current plans by Sunnica to build the country's largest solar farm in Suffolk and East Cambridgeshire. Suffolk County Council have asked the Government to reject the plans in its current form, arguing the application fails to properly mitigate the impacts of such a large project. In addition, the Cabinet voted on approving the National Grid's project to scale up its energy infrastructure from Bramford to Twinstead, as part of the Government's Net-Zero plan to increase low-carbon energy in the UK.

Full Council 24th March

Full Council presented a rare opportunity of solidarity between Councillors, as our Group and the Conservatives shared a single motion in support of Ukraine. Our Group recommended a motion condemning the actions of the Russian government, as well as commitment to supporting and welcoming refugees as they become a part of our Suffolk communities. The Conservatives supported our idea and together we showed how politics can be put aside through difficult times.

UKRAINE REFUGEES; I have sent all available details of what needs and can be done to help those offering a home to the refugees. There are still many issues till to sort out including school places and home inspections, plus visas.

Cabinet 29th March

The Cabinet met to vote on a plan to establish 'Freeport East'. This is part of a national strategy to create freeports across the country, in an attempt to generate economic activity through tax incentives. Felixstowe Port, Harwich Port, and Stowmarket's 'Gateway 14' Business Park are set to become part of Freeport East. Our Group is severely concerned with this project, as foreign direct investment is being prioritised over local businesses, many of which will now not be able to compete with the foreign businesses receiving tax relief. The Cabinet also voted on the Enhanced Partnership between SCC and bus operators, in line with the new Bus Back Better strategy, aimed at improving services across Suffolk. The improvement plan was voted for in October 2021. Our Group have concerns on the Government's promise of funding, as no funding has yet been confirmed by the Department for Transport.

AVAIAN FLU; I have circulated the details of the recent outbreak in Buxhall near Stowmarket and the area for exclusion. The signs are still up .

International Women's Month, and Day 2022 – #BreaktheBias

In March, we celebrated International Women's Month 2022. This is a time to acknowledge and celebrate the amazing achievements of women and push further for equality around the world.

Our group was immensely supportive of this celebration. Suffolk GLI's Spokesperson for Women, Cllr Caroline Page, called for the flag for Women's History Month to be flown high next year at Endeavour House. Suffolk County Council agreed this was an important step forward.

BUS BACK BRITAIN Suffolk county council was unsuccessful in Its bid to government for money to provide more bus routes which is very disappointing as so many of our buses have had to be withdrawn

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Instagram (New!) - https://www.instagram.com/suffolkgli_group/

Website - [Suffolk Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group – The GLI Group at Suffolk County Council \(suffolkgli.wordpress.com\)](#)

MIDSUFFOLK.

I have sent the revised wording for the gliding club and await their new application.

GOVERNMENT ENERGY GRANTS; the £150 pound will be given to all who pay council tax by direct debit, the council must contact those who do not to tell them how to apply. I have also asked how they will help those who pay their Tax direct to their landlord. Will the landlord then pass back to the tenants???

COUNCIL HOUSE RENTS; following a problem with mail company NOT delivering the information about the rent rises this will be resent and any rise will now start from 2nd May.

LEISURE CENTRE; new disable facilities for the Stowmarket leisure centre.