

# Felsham Parish Council

## **Minutes of the MEETING of FELSHAM PARISH COUNCIL held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025 in the Village Hall**

**Present:** Cllr Simon Garrod (Chairman); Cllr Ken Sparkes; Cllr Mark Tavernor;  
**In attendance:** SCC Cllr Penny Otton; MSDC Cllr Nicky Willshire; Clerk & RFO Miss Isabelle Reece  
**Apologies:** Cllr Beverley Williams; Cllr Karen Hubbard; Cllr Jason Stringer

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**2024/107 Chairman's Welcome; to receive apologies for absence** - Chairman Cllr Garrod welcomed everyone to the meeting and received apologies from Cllrs Stringer, Williams and Hubbard.

**2024/108 Declarations of interest & requests for dispensation** – Cllr Sparkes for the Felsham Charity

**2024/109 Minutes of the Previous Parish Council** – the Minutes of the meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> December were considered, **APPROVED**, and signed by Cllr Garrod as a true record

### **2024/110 To receive reports from SCC & MSDC Cllrs**

#### **a. SCC Cllr Penny Otton**

Cllr Otton's report, previously circulated, was noted and is available on this website. Later Cllr Otton highlighted Suffolk County Council's Extraordinary Meeting on 'Devolution' and Local Government Reform. It was decided that Suffolk request inclusion in the 'fast track' scheme, and that a delay to suspend this year's County Council Elections. Cllr Otton also highlighted motions agreed on the 'Agricultural Property Levy' and on Solar Panel installation on schools and commercial buildings; as well as a motion to explore a knife crime strategy. Cllr Otton also offered to smooth the way for any Licence requirements necessary for the kissing gate.

#### **b. MSDC Cllr Nicky Willshire**

Cllr Willshire had sent her report prior to the meeting and is available on this website. Mid Suffolk District Councillors are to be briefed on Devolution and Local Government Reform later in the week; Work on Part Two of the Joint Local Plan will be to ascertain whether it meets the requirements of the new National Planning Policy Framework. The main uncertainty is over the increase in new housing requirements. Cllr Willshire also highlighted new funding for projects including Thurston Community College and improvements to the railway at Thurston. She also expressed her surprise that MSDC's decision to freeze Council Tax had been somewhat controversial.

**2024/111 Public Forum** – There were no members of the public in attendance

**2024/112 To receive Clerk's Report** – it had not been possible for the Clerk to complete the Central Government Consultation on Attendance at Meetings

### **2024/113 Finance & Governance**

**a. To receive a financial update (RFO's Report)** – The Clerk had circulated a Financial Report; the bank reconciliation was signed by Cllr Sparkes

**b. Payment orders totalling £252.60 were APPROVED** – Clerk's Salary (December)

**c. To Review 2<sup>nd</sup> draft Budget 2025-26** – amendments were made to the Second Draft Budget with was **APPROVED**; the process for triggering a donation to the CAB was clarified

**d. To Consider Precept 2025-26** – It was **AGREED** that there was no need to increase the Precept

**e. There were no other Finance & Governance matters**

### **2024/114 Planning**

**a. There had been no Planning Applications since issue of this Agenda**

**b. There had been no Notices received since the issue of this Agenda**

**c. Other Planning Matters** – the Retrospective Planning Application for the Listed Six Bells Wall still to be

investigated

**2024/115 Village Maintenance – Trees & Greens**

**a. To receive a report from the Tree Officer** – Nothing to report

**b. To consider matters reported & updates** – Nothing reported

**c. Mowing Regime** – awaiting finalisation of contract. The number of cuts per year was increased by two.

**d. Village Sign** – the contractor had informed Cllr Sparkes that the sign could be ready for collection in April. Deposit will need to be paid. **ACTION** – Cllr Sparkes to ask for invoice and bank details to be sent to Clerk

**e. Permanent beacon project** – unfortunately the local artisan who had offered to fabricate the beacon was unable to guarantee supply within the required timescale. Cllr Williams had provided the meeting with specification & costs of ready made beacons (and posts). Proposed by Cllr Kearney & seconded by Cllr Sparkes, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** to order the 'Lancaster', which will be installed on the Upper Green. **ACTION** – Clerk to request that all information on the beacon be forwarded to her by Cllr Williams for the Clerk to place the order; Clerk to submit Application Form for Cllr Willshire's Locality Budget

**2024/116 Conservation Area**

**a. To receive a report from the Conservation Office** – nothing to report

**b. To consider any matters reported** – nothing reported

**2024/117 Highways & Footpaths**

**a. Parking at The Orchard** – remaining surveys yet to be collected; Cllr Sparkes had identified a parishioner for a working group.

**b. To receive a report from the Footpath Officer** – Footpath 7, excessive dog fouling reported, especially unacceptable given the proximity of two dog bins. **ACTION** – Clerk & Cllr Kearney to organise a sign for mounting on path and publication in F & G Village News

**c. To consider any matters reported** – nothing further reported

**d. Flooding & drainage** – no update available

**e. Solar Lighting project** – no update available: project pending until completion of existing projects restores 'capacity'.

**f. Community Road Safety** – no update available

**g. Kissing Gate Project** – Cllr Kearney reported on suppliers for the model of kissing gate decided upon at the last meeting; it is also fully British Standards compliant. (Installation agreed by PC volunteers will result in considerable saving.) **ACTION** – Cllr Kearney to supply all details for Clerk to order. Clerk also requested what location was required for delivery.

**2024/118 (Local Housing Needs – no update available)**

**2024/119 Correspondence**

**a. Parish Council Suggestions Box QR Code** – no update available

**b. to note correspondence & consider action** – no action necessary

**2024/120 Matters to be brought to the attention of the council/future agenda items** – nothing further

**2024/121 To confirm date of the next Meeting** – Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025

**The Meeting was closed by Cllr Garrod at 20.36hrs**

**Signed**\_\_\_\_\_ **Chairman** **Dated**\_\_\_\_\_