

Felsham Parish Council

Minutes of the MEETING of FELSHAM PARISH COUNCIL **held on 12th November 2024 in the Village Hall**

Present: Cllr Simon Garrod (Chairman) from 19.45hrs; Cllr Paul Kearney; Cllr Mark Tavernor; Cllr Jason Stringer; Cllr Beverley Williams; Cllr Karen Hubbard (Co-opted at Item 2024/083d)

In attendance: SCC Cllr Penny Otton; MSDC Cllr Nicky Willshire ; Clerk & RFO Miss Isabelle Reece

Apologies: Cllr Ken Sparkes

2024/077 Chairman's Welcome & to receive apologies for absence – Chairman Cllr Garrod welcomed everyone to the meeting and received apologies from Cllr Sparkes

2024/078 Declarations of interest & requests for dispensation – There were no such declarations

2024/079 Minutes of the Previous Parish Council – the Minutes of the meeting of 8th October were considered, **APPROVED**, and signed by Cllr Garrod as a true record

2024/080 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. Cllr Otton highlighted the Motion passed which opposed the cuts to the Winter Fuel Allowance; the interest-free loans for energy efficiency measures; her Group's motion on changing criteria & budget for footpath maintenance; budget allocations for parishes worst-hit by flooding; the pharmacy survey, which she had completed. There was a short discussion on the out-of-hours pharmacy facility in Woolpit.

b. MSDC Cllr Nicky Willshire

Cllr Willshire had sent her report prior to the meeting and is available on this website. Cllr Willshire highlighted the new local Community Taxi Service, which does not really serve Felsham; and especially her update with the Planning Officer for the Land Behind 6 Bells Applications; of which earlier Application remains under Review by the Planning Expectorate; the current Application was due in Committee the coming week, with recommendation for Refusal

2024/081 Public Forum – Cllr Otton enquired about Item 2024/087g and was given a brief explanation by Cllr Kearney

2024/082 To receive Clerk's Report – Nothing to report not covered elsewhere on the Agenda

2024/083 Finance & Governance

a. To receive a financial update (RFO's Report) the Clerk had circulated a Financial Report; Cllr Tavernor verified & signed the Bank Reconciliation.

b. Payments totalling £886.20 were APPROVED – Clerk's Salary (October); TGS – Grass Cutting £633.60

c. The Internal Auditor had not yet sent the Internal Audit Report

d. Co-option of new Councillor – Ms Karen Hubbard made a brief presentation to the Council in application for the existing vacancy; after which she left the meeting while the Council considered her Application. Proposed by Cllr Garrod and seconded by Cllr Williams Karen Hubbard was duly **ELECTED By CO-OPTION** to the Council; whereupon she signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting.

e. Requests from Felsham & Gedding Village Hall – Proposed by Cllr Garrod, seconded by Cllr Kearney & a Unanimous Vote For, the Council **RESOLVED** to contribute half the cost of the Village Hall's Planning Application Fee; Proposed by Cllr Tavernor, seconded by Cllr Kearney & a Unanimous Vote For, the Council **RESOLVED** to provide half of the cost of this year's Village Christmas Tree.

f. Further Finance & Governance matters – The Clerk alerted the Council to the new NALC Financial Regulations, relevant changes of which would be incorporated into Felsham's own; on the strengthened Law on Sexual Harassment at Work, which was introduced at the end of October and on the Consultation on Attendance at Meetings. The last matter was discussed and the Council **AGREED** that it did not support the option of Remote Attendance. **ACTION** – Clerk to submit Response

2024/084 Planning

a. Application DC/24/04315 Erection of two residential bungalows, cart lodges, associated parking and landscaping, utilising the existing public house access Location: Land Rear Of The Six Bells, Church Road. Cllr Williams had collated Comments on behalf of the Council– **OBJECTION** , which the Clerk had sent directly to the

relevant Planning Officer in time - **RATIFIED**; no other Planning Applications had been received since the issue of the Agenda

b. Decision DC/24/03945 IP30 OQG – NO OBJECTIONS by MSDC was NOTED; no Notices had been received since issue of this agenda

e. Other Planning matters – Cllr Kearney queried if Retrospective Planning Permission had been made for the Six Bells Wall. **ACTION** – Clerk to Investigate

2024/085 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. To Review Mowing Regime – The Council discussed Cllr Tavernor's proposal to continue with 'environment friendly' Mowing Regime specifications on Lower Green in the coming year. Opinion was divided: the proposal was seconded by Cllr Garrod, whose Casting Vote For **RESOLVED** the Proposal.

Proposed by Cllr Tavernor, seconded by Cllr Garrod the Council **RESOLVED** to invite Tender from three different contractors, including the Parish Council's current contractor, Top Garden Services. Cllr Tavernor would continue to manage the Grass Cutting Regime & was **DELEGATED** to liaise with contractors, with a view to ensuring a more aesthetically pleasing 'finish'.

d. Village Sign Update – Mr Simpson had agreed to produce the Planning Application on behalf of the Parish Council. No further update available.

2024/086 Conservation Area

a. To receive a report from the Conservation Office – Nothing to report, except see Item 2024/084e above

b. To consider any matters reported – Nothing reported

2024/087 Highways & Footpaths

a. Parking at The Orchard – No update available

b. To receive a report from the Footpath Officer – Cllr Kearney reported that the footpaths he had walked recently were in fairly good walkable condition given the season

c. To consider any matters reported – Nothing further reported

d. Flooding & drainage – there was some general discussion on historic drainage provision, but no update on map availability.

e. Solar Lighting project – no update or flyer for project yet available. The Clerk had not yet received contributions from councillors as to what they wished to see included; Cllr Kearney suggested, and Council agreed, that the Project be extended to include Meadow Close.

f. Community Road Safety – Cllr Williams volunteered to join Cllr Stringer's Speed Watch Group, as had a member of the Public who had been at the September Parish Council Meeting. **ACTION** Cllr Stringer to reissue post on Village facebook page; VAS activity was discussed and queried: **ACTION** – Cllr Tavernor to contact VAS volunteers to offer support with brackets & batteries via Cllr Kearney and request feedback on activity.

g. Kissing Gate Project – Cllr Kearney shared available design options, along with his recommendation, which was **AGREED**, as well as options for installation & labour requirements **ACTION** – Cllr Kearney to obtain quotations from three suppliers for the December Meeting

2024/088 Local Housing Needs – Cllr Williams had attended the Community Led Housing Event in Lavenham. It was interesting, not least to cast doubt as to the capacity of Felsham to drive such a project.

2024/089 Correspondence

a. Parish Council Suggestions Box update – almost complete; label **AGREED**

b. to note correspondence & consider action – correspondence re DC/24/04315 **NOTED**; nothing to be pursued

2024/090 Matters brought to the attention of the council/future agenda items- traffic management; format of APM, Clerk's Appraisal; VE Day 80th Anniversary; Permanent Beacon for Village; Grit Boxes & Planters; QR Code for Suggestions Box; Lengthsman. Cllr Williams agreed to post printout of Agenda on PC Noticeboard

2024/091 To confirm date of the next Meeting – Tuesday 10th December 2024

The Meeting was closed by Cllr Garrod at 21.23hrs

Signed _____ Chairman Dated _____