

Felsham Parish Council

Minutes of the MEETING of FELSHAM PARISH COUNCIL **held on 8th October 2024 in the Village Hall**

Present: Cllr Simon Garrod (Chairman) from 19.45hrs; Cllr Ken Sparkes; Cllr Paul Kearney;
Cllr Mark Tavernor

In attendance: 4 Members of the Public; SCC Cllr Penny Otton; MSDC Cllr Nicky Willshire ; Clerk &
RFO Miss Isabelle Reece

Apologies: Cllr Jason Stringer; Cllr Beverley Williams

2024/062 Chairman's Welcome; to receive apologies for absence – Deputy Chairman Cllr Sparkes welcomed everyone to the meeting and received apologies from Cllrs Williams and Stringer. Chairman Cllr Garrod had sent notice that he would arrive by 20.00hrs

2024/063 Declarations of interest & requests for dispensation – Cllr Sparkes: Felsham Charity

2024/064 Minutes of the Previous Parish Council – the Minutes of the meeting of 10th September were considered, **APPROVED**, and signed by Cllr Sparkes as a true record

2024/065 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 forthcoming changes to waste disposal and collection, which would impact County and District Councils respectively; the uncertainty over the future both of Thurston Community College and the proposals for devolution in Suffolk. She also mentioned the interest free loans available for energy efficiency measures and the local Nature Recovery Strategy webinars

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 lengthy debate in Full Council on controversial changes to waste collection & recycling, and some of the challenges envisaged, including the future of community (fund raising) bottle banks. New electric vehicles will be purchased. Cllr Willshire also reported on her recent meeting with the Locality Officer; as well as on possible resources available for improvements to parking facilities on Council owned property. Cllr Sparkes requested that Cllr Willshire investigate the vegetation overgrowth hindering access to the former Community Room (of the formerly sheltered housing) on The Orchard.

2024/066 Public Forum – The Architect for new Application DC/24/04315 Land Rear Of The Six Bells, Church Road, Felsham, spoke of the plans and answered questions from parishioners. He acknowledged parishioners' concerns on this latest, as well as the previous schemes devised by others; the previous scheme still in the process of an Appeal application. He left hard copies of the plans to help the Parish Council its deliberations. Parishioners spoke of the similarities in with previous applications for the site and reiterated the fundamental objections to the scheme: the impact on the core of the settlement within the Conservation Area and inevitable consequential loss of Setting and Amenity; one of the reasons for the refusal to the last Application. Cllr Otton expressed her dismay that SCC Highways had not objected to previous versions of the proposals over access and road safety.

2024/067 To receive Clerk's Report – Nothing to report not covered elsewhere on the Agenda

2024/068 Finance & Governance

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

b. Payments totalling ££252.60 were APPROVED – Clerk's Salary (September)

c. The Internal Auditor had not yet sent the Report

d. Co-option of new Councillor – Following contact from several applicants since the last Parish Council Meeting, to comply with legal requirements Co-option of a new councillor was deferred until the next meeting

e. There were no other Finance & Governance matters

2024/069 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 – During a continuation of discussions with the architect over details of the proposals, Cllrs reiterated existing concerns; **EXTENSION REQUEST & COUNCILLORS TO CRYSTALLIZE COMMENT FOR NOVEMBER MEETING**; no other Planning Applications had been received since the issue of the Agenda

b. No Notices had been received since issue of this agenda

e. There were no other Planning matters

2024/070 Village Maintenance – Trees & Greens

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

b. To consider matters reported & updates – Nothing Reported. A review of the Mowing Regime would be on the November Agenda

c. Village Sign Update – in discussions with the fabricator, Cllr Sparkes had confirmed that a double-sided sign with the year was required. As soon as final agreement was reached, a firm order would be placed and then an application for Planning Permission prepared and submitted. **ACTION** – Clerk to follow up earlier contact with Mr Simpson

2024/071 Conservation Area

a. To receive a report from the Conservation Office – Nothing to report

b. To consider any matters reported – Nothing reported

2024/072 Highways & Footpaths

a. Parking at The Orchard – Cllr Sparkes reported a 50% return of the household surveys and would pursue the remaining households

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

c. To consider any matters reported – Nothing further reported

d. Flooding & drainage – the Clerk had circulated details of a Suffolk County Council Flooding Forum. Councillors confirmed that nearly all the local flooding issues had been resolved due to extensive maintenance undertaken by Felsham landowners.

e. Solar Lighting project – flyer for project not yet available, **ACTION** Councillors to submit questions to include

f. Community Speed Watch – no update available. Agenda item to be changed to 'Community Road Safety'; it was confirmed that an existing Speed Watch Group was necessary for the Police to carry out enforcement; data from data collection SIDs would collect but not share data. **ACTION** – Clerk to contact Cllr Otton to confirm criteria. A resident

g. Kissing Gate Project – Cllr Kearney had almost completed recommendations for the design; had secured agreement from the relevant landowner for a very slight encroachment, which would optimise the design options.

2024/073 Local Housing Needs – no update available. The Clerk had circulated the invitation to the forthcoming Community Led Housing Event in Lavenham.

2024/074 Correspondence

a. To consider introduction of a Parish Council Suggestions Box – no update available

b. to note correspondence & consider action – nothing to be pursued

2024/075 Matters to be brought to the attention of the council/future agenda items

Co-option of councillor; review of mowing regime; traffic management; format of APM, Clerk's Appraisal

2024/076 To confirm date of the next Meeting – Tuesday 12th November 2024

The Meeting was closed by Cllr Garrod at 20.28hrs

Signed_____ **Chairman** **Dated**_____