

# Felsham Parish Council

## Minutes of the MEETING of FELSHAM PARISH COUNCIL held on 12th March 2024 in the Village Hall

**Present:** Cllr Simon Garrod (Chairman), Cllr Ken Sparkes, Cllr Paul Kearney, Cllr Jason Stringer, Cllr Mark Tavernor

**In attendance:** 1 Member of the Public; SCC Cllr Penny Otton; Clerk & RFO Miss Isabelle Reece

**Apologies:** MSDC Cllr Nicky Willshere

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**2023/133 Welcome & to receive apologies for absence** – Cllr Garrod welcomed everyone to the meeting

**2023/134 Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensation** – Cllr Sparkes for the Felsham Charity

**2023/135 Minutes of previous Parish Council Meeting** – The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 12th February were considered, **APPROVED**, and signed by Cllr Garrod as a true record

**2023/136 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 underlined the importance of wide local representation at relevant Planning Committee Meetings. The main issues of her Report were the SCC Annual Budget and problems caused by Flooding; as well as the rebuilding of schools found to contain RAAC and the Suffolk Devolution Consultation. There had not been any progress on the parking issue at The Orchard or the bridge at the foot of Gedding Hill

**b. MSDC Cllr Nicky Willshere** – Cllr Willshere's report, previously circulated, was noted and is available on this website

**2023/137 Public Forum**

A long-standing parishioner with a record of service in the Village expressed interest in serving on the Parish Council

**2023/138 Clerk's report**

The Clerk had nothing specific to report not covered elsewhere on the Agenda

**2023/139 Finance & Governance**

**a. To receive a financial update** – the Clerk had circulated a Financial Reports for February; Cllr Tavernor verified & signed the Bank Reconciliation

**b. The following orders requested for payment** were **APPROVED**– Clerk's Salary (February) £217.00; Village Hall Christmas Tree – £100.00; Village Hall Hire – £105.00 (Not the £150.00 on Agenda)

**c. To Review Risk Register & Financial Regulations** – The Risk Register and Financial Regulations were reviewed and **APPROVED**. Cllr Tavernor enquired about storage of old Council Documents, some of which are not lodged with the Clerk: ideally any very old ones should be sent to the local Public Records Office, but since this is in upheaval at present, it was **AGREED** to investigate when the matter was settled.

**d. To review Internal Audit Plan** – The Internal Audit Plan was reviewed and **APPROVED**

**e. To Appoint Internal Auditor for 2023-24** – Confirmation had not yet been received from the potential Internal Auditor

**f. To consider any other Finance & Governance matters** – there were no further urgent Finance & Governance Matters

**2023/140 Planning**

**a. To consider Planning Application - DC/24/01073** Lower Green Cottage, Lower Green, Felsham IP30 0PP: Removal of small glazed enclosed porch and upgrading of inner entrance door to exterior standard – **NO COMMENTS ; no Planning Applications had been received since issue of the Agenda**

**b. Decisions**– **APP/W3520/W/23/3323104 DC/23/00640DC/23/05045** Land behind Six Bells, Church Rd Felsham; **APPEAL DISMISSED; DC/24/00436** The Old Rectory, Church Road, Felsham, IP30 0PW – Discharge of Conditions: Newts were **NOTED. No notices had been received since issue of the Agenda**

**c. To consider other Planning matters** – The status the Pub and Shop have as Assets of Community Value is due to end. It was **AGREED** to reapply for ACV Status. **ACTION** – Clerk to reapply

**2023/141 Village Maintenance**

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

**b. To consider matters reported & updates** – **ACTION** 2024 Cutting Regime to be re-sent to contractor

**2023/142 Conservation Area**

**a. To receive a report from the Conservation Office** – the edges of the Village Greens have become eroded over the very wet Autumn & Winter, especially a portion of Lower Green, which was recently churned up by an HGV. Since funding from SCC would be unlikely the Parish Council would investigate what it could do to remedy the situation later in the year when the ground was drier.

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

**2023/143 Highways & Footpaths**

**a. To receive a report from the Footpath Officer** – all the paths are very wet or waterlogged.

**b. To consider any matters reported** – Cllr Kearney asked for clarification of the Bury Road Kissing Gate project: this has been designated as a Summer Project with £1000.00 to be designated as Reserve and further funding to be sought.

**c. Flooding & drainage** – Cllr Tavernor reported to having several years previously spoken to a SCC Highways surveyor who had informed him that there were in fact no records of the drainage systems; and that local knowledge was probably much greater. Cllrs Garrod & Tavernor had done some work to clear blocked pipes, but a lot more needed clearing and/or repair or replacement. The Clerk had not yet received a reply from SCC Highways on the matter.

**d. Solar Lighting project** – no update available. The Clerk had circulated the National Landscape Lighting Guide. It was also reported that the footpath on Meadow Close was impossibly dark overgrown and an uneven surface. There may be scope for a wider solar lighting project.

**e. Community Speed Watch and Speed signs**– Cllr Tavernor reported that had obtained further help from the parishioners who deal with the local SIDs; that moving one of the SIDs to the Bury Road would be problematic at present because of faulty equipment and a lack of appropriate mounting brackets. **ACTION** – Cllr Tavernor to obtain information on equipment for the Clerk. Cllr Stringer reported no more interest from potential Volunteers. **ACTION** – Clerk to re-contact Gedding PC

**2023/144 Correspondence** – no further action necessary

**2023/145 Local Housing Needs** – it was **AGREED** that a date for the Meeting was to be set at the April Parish Council Meeting.

**2023/146 Village Sign** – No update yet available

**2023/147 Matters to be brought to the attention of the council/future agenda items** – Co-option of New Councillor at next Meeting; Date of Public Meeting on Local Housing Needs; Reinstatement of Greens

**2023/148 To confirm date of the next Parish Council Meeting** – Tuesday 9th April 2024 (error on Agenda)

**2023/149 To confirm date of the Annual Parish Meeting** – 14th May 2024 19.00hrs; to be followed by the Annual (General) Meeting of the Parish Council

**The Meeting was closed by Cllr Garrod at 20.23hrs**

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