

## NOWTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024  
At 7.00 p.m. in Nowton Village Hall, Nowton

**Present:** Councillor - Mr Henry Hopking (Chairman)  
Councillor - Mr Mike May  
Councillor - Mr Ross O'Hara  
Councillor - Ms Abigail Smith  
Parish Clerk - Mrs Pauline Stoddart

Prior to the commencement of the meeting: 10 minutes Public Forum – one parishioner, Mr David Flatt, and Cllr. Karen Soons were present.

1. **Election of Parish Council Chairman** – Councillors were unanimously in favour of Councillor Hopking being re-elected as Chairman and Cllr. Hopking kindly accepted.
2. **Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chairman** – the 'Acceptance of Office as Chairman' form was signed by Cllr. Hopking and countersigned by the Clerk/RFO.
3. **Apologies for Absence** – none, all Councillors present.
4. **To receive Declarations of Interest** – Cllr. May declared an interest re item 12.1.
5. **Vacancy for Parish Councillor** – the Chairman reiterated that the vacancy had now existed for a year and urged Councillors to canvass more widely, reminding them that potential Councillors could live within three miles of the parish area, or be eligible if their principal or only place of work was within the parish.
6. **Ratification of the Minutes from the Annual Parish Council** meeting held 24 May 2023, as approved at the meeting held 5 July 2023. Proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr. May, all in agreement.
7. **Approval of the Draft Minutes** from the meeting held 24 April 2024. Approved as a true and accurate record. Proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. O'Hara and duly signed by the Chairman.
8. **Matters arising from the Minutes 24 April** – the Chairman reviewed the actions points from the meeting and discussed three specific issues with Cllr. Soons:
  - 8.1 (11) Pot hole reporting – the Chairman advised that the message on the website when reporting pot holes had changed, to one that was non-specific as to when the issue might be addressed.
  - 8.2 Roadside edges were rapidly deteriorating and vegetation was becoming extremely overgrown, making it impossible to see the deeply rutted and broken edges of the road when driving.
  - 8.3 (11) Cllr. O'Hara mentioned Road Closed signs that were being placed an inordinate distance from where the road was actually closed.

Cllr. Soons requested that the Chairman forward her an example re the pot holes wording. **Action: Chairman**

**9. Public Forum** – no discussions.

**10. Finance**, including balance of accounts: Current £973.31; Business £8,180.36  
Total: £9,153.67. The Clerk confirmed the precept of £4,514 had been received.

10.1 To receive and approve cheques to be signed at the meeting; one cheque was approved and signed:

100459 SALC, Annual Subscription      £115.97

10.2 To receive and note the Internal Auditor's Report, completed by Mrs Nicole Nicholls, for the year-ended 31 March 2024.

10.3 To consider, approve and sign the Annual Governance Statement – the Statement had been previously circulated and was taken as read.  
Unanimously agreed and duly signed by the Chairman and Clerk/RFO.

10.4 To consider, approve and sign the Accounting Statements 2023/2024 – the Statement had been previously circulated and was taken as read.  
Unanimously agreed and duly signed by the Chairman and Clerk/RFO.

10.5 To consider, approve and sign the Certificate of Exemption – the certificate had been previously circulated and was taken as read. Unanimously agreed and duly signed by the Chairman and Clerk/RFO.

**11. Review of Internal Control Statement** – A copy of the Internal Control Statement had been previously circulated to Councillors and was taken as read. Agreed and duly signed by the Chairman.

**12. Planning** – DC/24/0545/HH, High Green House, Nowton. Construction of swimming pool. Cllr. May declared an interest as an immediate neighbour. Councillors agreed to support the application. **Action: Clerk**

**13. Road Safety, Crime/Public Nuisance** – the Chairman updated Cllr. Soons advising her that the Council were going ahead with plans for a suitability site check for one SID pole, which would be provided free of charge. Cllr. Soons recommended examining two/three sites and advised she would be happy to support the additional costs for the extra pole/s from her Locality Budget, if further locations were identified. The Chairman confirmed he was in possession of the necessary forms to complete, in order to move the project forward. **Action: Chairman**

13.1 Cllr. O'Hara highlighted the footpath on the Bury Road towards the Village Hall, which was in urgent need of sweeping/cleaning due to a large quantity of leaves and debris, making it impossible to, for instance, push a pram along the path. The debris had narrowed the path to such an extent pedestrians were extremely close to the edge of the road and passing traffic. Cllr. Soons requested an email concerning this be sent to her. **Action: Clerk**

**14. Correspondence** – Clerks & Councillors Direct Newsletter was given to the Chairman for reading and onward distribution to all Councillors. All email correspondence received by the Clerk had been circulated to Councillors upon receipt.

14.1 Cllr. Soons mentioned the SCC devolution consultation which was due to expire on the 26 May, should the Council wish to comment.

- 14.2 Cllr. Soons requested a copy of the Chairman's annual report, due to be delivered at the Annual Assembly of the Parish meeting, for which Cllr. Soons gave her apologies for absence as she was unable to attend.  
**Action: Clerk**

**Award Certificate –**

The meeting was adjourned for the presentation by Cllr. Soons to David Flatt of an Award Certificate, known as the County Councillor Award, which is a new initiative by SCC to recognise individuals or groups that make a difference where they live by their hard work and commitment to the community. David Flatt was a worthy recipient of this first ever award for Nowton, having served as a Parish Councillor for over 21 years, from 2002 until 2023.

**15. Next Meeting – Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 7.00 p.m.**

Future 2024 meetings: 4 September; 16 October; 4 December - *All meeting dates are subject to change.*

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.36 p.m.

Signed .....(original signed) ..... Date .....3/7/2024.....