

# Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve Parish Council  
held on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024 at 7.30pm, in the Village Hall

**Councillors present:** Cllr. M Collier - Vice Chair (MC), Cllr. P. Butler (PBu) & Cllr. J. Rushman (JR)

**Also present:** Vicky Bright, Clerk PC. Cllr. Sarah Broughton – WSC. Cllr. Rebecca Hopfensperger – WSC/SCC.

ITEM	<b><u>PUBLIC FORUM:</u></b>
	No members of the public were in attendance.
24/07/1	<b><u>Chairman's Welcome &amp; Acceptance of Apologies for Absence (LGA 1972, Section 85(1) &amp; (2)):</u></b> <b>Apologies:</b> Cllr. J. Borrett & Cllr. P. Borrett. Cllr. N. Steward.  Cllr. Collier (Vice Chair) will Chair the meeting in the absence of the Chair.
24/07/2	<b><u>Declaration of Members' Interest (for items on the agenda) – LGA 2000 Part III:</u></b> None.
24/07/3	<b><u>Approval of the Minutes of the Parish Council meetings – LGA 1972, Schedule 12, para 41(2):</u></b> <b><u>Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2024</u></b> <b><u>Resolved 24/07/3.01</u></b> The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 17 <sup>th</sup> June 2024 were adopted as a true statement and signed by the Vice Chairman (MC), in the absence of the Chair.
24/07/4	<b><u>Councillor Vacancies</u></b> The Clerk confirmed that the Council still has one casual vacancy available for the parish of FSM. It was suggested that the Clerk revamp the advert, making it more attention grabbing and put a copy in the notice boards and in the Bugle.
24/07/5	<b><u>Local Authority Reports:</u></b> <b><u>County &amp; District Councillors:</u></b> Cllr. Broughton gave information on two funds currently available for community groups; Thriving Communities Fund and the Decarbonisation Initiatives Fund. The Clerk confirmed that she had forwarded both these funds to the Village Hall Committee.  Cllr. Hopfensperger gave the following reports; WSC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At Full Council meeting a proposal was put forward to refurbish the Leisure Centre at a cost of £8.5 million, following the Hub project being withdrawn, it was requested that the proposal be amended to allow for full public consultation on this and Cllr. Hopfensperger asked the Portfolio Holder and the CEO to see the consultation before it is released.</li><li>• A further proposal was put forward for development of the Olding Road, Bury St Edmunds NHS building and the Old Depot, to get it in a rentable condition for small business unit use.</li><li>• Cllr. Hopfensperger has raised with the Portfolio Holder the quality of the grass cutting and the fact that it is not happening 3-weekly and is not being cut short enough.</li></ul>

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Cllr. Hopfensperger gave an update on Items 6(v), 7(iii) 7(iv), 7(v), 7 (vi), 7 (vii) & 8(iii), see items below.

24/07/6

## **Planning:**

(For information only):

- i) **DC/24/0614/FUL - partial change of use of golf course to site six timber pods. Location: All Saints Hotel, The Street, Fornham St Genevieve – Holding Objection!**
- ii) **AMENDED DC/24/0433/FUL - create a maintenance access into All Saints Golf and Country Club off The Street, Fornham St. Genevieve. Location: Access To All Saints Hotel, Land Off the Street, Fornham All Saints – Refused 8<sup>th</sup> July 2024.**
- iii) **DC/24/0174/FUL - retention of outdoor gymnasium including open sided exercise shelter, moveable exercise equipment and equipment storage container. Location: All Saints Hotel, The Street, Fornham St Genevieve – Pending Decision!**
- iv) **DC/20/0496/FUL - 68 lodges with parking, landscaping, waste and recycling areas and construction compound/maintenance area. Location: St Genevieve Lakes, Road from Bury Road to B1106, Timworth – Pending Decision!**
- v) **Possible breach of planning conditions of the Holiday Lodges at Aspen Park Update (RH) –** Cllr. Hopfensperger confirmed she has sent the details and photos to the Enforcement Officer and he has confirmed he will write to the owners, when he has time!
- vi) **Possible breach of planning/appeal refusal DC/22/1378/FUL Outdoor Gym, All Saints Hotel EN/21/0057 –** The Clerk confirmed that she had, along with FASPC, reported the fact that the outdoor gym is being used again for classes, following reports from neighbouring residents, of early morning classes. The Clerk confirmed that this has been recorded against the current enforcement case.
- vii) **West Suffolk Local Plan Update**  
The Clerk reported the following update on the WSC Local Plan;  
*'The inspectors have been appointed for the submitted local plan and they are Inspector W Fieldhouse BA(Hons)MA MRTPI and Inspector R Kirby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI.*  
  
*The next steps will be for the inspectors to undertake an initial assessment of the plan, the representations received at the last consultation, and the supporting evidence. They will then identify the matters and issues that will provide the focus for the examination.*  
  
*The inspectors may write to the council with a series of initial queries and we expect this process to start in July. This will assist in their understanding of the plan and the evidence base ahead of the examination in public which we expect to take place later this year or in early 2025.*  
  
*Any future updates or letters from the inspectors will be uploaded on the examination website at [West Suffolk Local Plan \(Regulation 24\) 2024 - Examination in public - West Suffolk Planning Policy Consultations \(inconsult.uk\)](https://www.inconsult.uk)*

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The Clerk confirmed that the Examination in Public Consultation had begun and will run until 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025. [West Suffolk Local Plan \(Regulation 24\) 2024 - Examination in public - West Suffolk Planning Policy Consultations \(inconsult.uk\)](https://www.inconsult.uk)

24/07/7

## **Highways/Footpaths & Trees:**

i)

### **Update on Old Thetford Road footpaths Maintenance and adoption by PROW**

The Clerk reported that there is currently no update on the adoption of the sections of footpath, but she is working on the application for the adoption of the 'sheep pastures' section of the footpath.

ii)

### **Update on Barton Hill Footpath surface mud & flooding**

Cllr. Steward has checked the footpath and currently the issue of mud/flooding is better, so it was agreed to monitor the situation and report if it becomes a problem again during wet weather.

iii)

### **Street light Russell Baron Road – Reinstatement SCC update**

Cllr. Hopfensperger advised there is no update on a date for the connection to be completed yet.

iv)

### **Update on White lining/hatching outside the Woolpack pub**

Cllr. Hopfensperger confirmed that an inspection had been carried out and works had been ordered to repaint the hatching and lining, although no date had yet been confirmed for the works to start.

v)

### **Highways site inspection Re: Signage/lining on B1106 towards Culford/West Stow Road**

Cllr. Hopfensperger and Parish Councillors Paul Butler, John Rushman and Mike Collier attended a site visit with Andy Moore – Highways SCC on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2024; they presented him with a list of issues with the junction, including signage, markings and bend signage improvements, and he seemed to be in agreement of the need and has gone away to put together a plan. He has confirmed that Surface Dressing (SDC) is to be carried out at the end of summer and this will include renewing the markings/linings and the same time. Cllr. Hopfensperger has since gone back to Andy and suggested perhaps installing reflective options to improve visibility at night for the traffic island and has suggested a yellow background SLOW DOWN BEND sign.

vi)

### **Russell Baron Road/Manners Road resurfacing**

Cllr. Hopfensperger confirmed that this has been included in the scheduled summer redressing (SDC) and should be carried out in the next 6 weeks.

vii)

### **Update on overgrown kerbs/footpaths reporting**

Cllr. Hopfensperger confirmed she had asked Mark Walsh to deal with the weeds that are growing on the kerbs and traffic islands from the St Genevieve roundabout to Barton Hill through the High Street, and she has also requested that the road sweeper be sent out to the villages.

The Clerk confirmed she has reported the overgrown nettles and weeds at the bus stop opposite Barton Hill and the footway from Barton Hill to the BMW garage, the Clerk is to forward the reference numbers to Cllr. Hopfensperger for her to follow up.

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The Clerk raised an email from Jill Mayhew from FASPC, regarding the overgrown vegetation which is making the footpath from St Genevieve to the Hotel impassable, it was agreed that the Clerk ask Jill for further details of the location and footpath, with photos, so she can then identify the landowner and report. Cllr. M. Collier is also going to ask Tilbrook's for a quote to cut back and tidy the green area by Anglian Water pumping station.

24/07/8

## **Parish Matters.**

i)

### **Weekly & Monthly H&S Inspection Reports Trim Trail & Play Area / Agree Rota**

No new issues were highlighted on the weekly or monthly inspections, other than a loose screw on the edging of the Trim Trail edging on the Pull-ups section. Cllr. Rushman has advised he will remove the screw and the Clerk is to source quotes to repair the wooden edging. Cllr. Rushman will carry out the weekly inspections from now until 31<sup>st</sup> July, at which point Cllr. Butler will carry out the inspections between 31<sup>st</sup> July – 14<sup>th</sup> August, whilst Cllr. Rushman is on holiday, Cllr. Rushman will then continue until the September meeting.

ii)

### **Play Area Repairs Quotes**

Item deferred to the next agenda; the Clerk is sourcing quotes for the works/repairs needed.

iii)

### **Market Stall 21 Barton Hill – Enforcement Update**

Cllr. Hopfensperger advised and the Clerk confirmed she had received an email from the Enforcement officer stating 'that an enforcement had been issued, as a S215 untidy land case - Requirements are to remove the market stalls and items for sale from the front garden. If only the stalls are removed with items for sale remaining, we would then need to make a decision whether it was expedient to pursue but that decision is in the future.'

iv)

### **Bugle Compiler & Distributor Vacancies Update**

The Clerk confirmed that Justin Hook has been appointed as the new Compiler, and he is currently working on the next edition due on 26<sup>th</sup> July.

The Clerk advised that she had still not received any interest in the volunteer position of distribution overseer, despite many notices in the Bugle. It was suggested that the distribution volunteers be approached directly, to see if anyone is prepared to take over. Cllr. Collier confirmed that Peter Forster had agreed to continue in the role until someone can be found to take over.

24/07/9

## **Correspondence:**

### **• WSC Street Trading Policy Consultation;**

*Earlier this year the council carried out public engagement to help decide its approach to street trading. This includes outdoor retail and catering in public streets but does not include the council's markets which are covered under different regulations. The aim of this public engagement was to look at what the level of regulation should be and how we get the balance right to support local businesses and the sustainable growth of our economy while also serving the interests of our residents and visitors. The outcome of this work found that the majority of respondents, which included residents, businesses and street traders, were in favour of there being some regulation to help deal with any issues such as litter, and poor quality of goods. They backed an approach whereby any street trader would need to apply for licensing consent from the council. The majority of people responding also said criminal records checks*

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*should be carried out. We have listened to all the feedback and we have now written a draft street trading policy which we are putting out for public consultation. Under the new policy traders would undergo a DBS check. A criminal record that involves sexual violence, especially involving children, or previous serious fraud charges, including the sale of counterfeit goods, would be immediately rejected. A criminal record involving other crimes would be considered on a case-by-case basis. We have also looked at what it would cost to administer the necessary checks to decide an application and the support related costs such as waste collection and enforcement. This is to ensure that the costs of street trading don't place a burden on taxpayers. From that we have calculated a fee of £409 per year for street traders. To help support events across West Suffolk organisers of large events with multiple street traders will only need to make one application for each event and provide the council with details of traders, public liability insurance certification, and proof of food registration (where relevant) a maximum of seven days before the event is held. This new fee is lower than some of our already licensed street traders pay currently although we also acknowledge that there will be others who haven't been paying anything due to the previous lack of regulation. This new policy once adopted will see a fair and consistent approach adopted for across the district. The placement of removable furniture (such as tables and chairs) by an existing premises onto a relevant highway is covered by the Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023, which has made permanent the temporary provisions introduced under the Business and Planning act. This is separate national legislation and does not fall within the scope of West Suffolk Council's Street trading policy.*

*Our consultation on the draft street trading policy runs to 5 August 2024 at;*

[www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/Council/Consultations/wsc-street-trading-policy-review-and-consultation.cfm](http://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/Council/Consultations/wsc-street-trading-policy-review-and-consultation.cfm).

*Further information from the public engagement can be found at the webpage above. Anyone unable to take part online, can contact [licensing@westsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@westsuffolk.gov.uk) or phone 01284 758050 to request a paper copy.*

- **WSC Taxi Unmet Demand Survey;**

*The taxi trade in West Suffolk plays a significant role in supporting our local economy, including leisure, tourism and education. In July 2022 West Suffolk Council, which is responsible for the licensing and regulation of the trade, removed the requirement for all new and replacement to be wheelchair accessible vehicles. At the time this decision was made the council committed to carrying out an unmet demand survey to assess the impact of this change. The purpose of this survey is to establish whether people, including passengers with mobility needs or disabilities, can get a taxi when they need it. This includes looking at where the ranks are to establish if they are still in the right locations, the number of bays on those ranks as well as the vehicles themselves to ensure for instance that people who use wheelchairs can access a taxi when they need to. The survey seeks the feedback from a range of people including taxi passengers, people with mobility needs or disabilities, businesses as well as the*

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*wider public to establish if there are people who are not using taxis due to difficulties of access.*

*The survey is available online at [www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/X1PPQK/](http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/X1PPQK/) and will run until 11 August 2024.*

*Anyone unable to take part online, can contact [licensing@westsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@westsuffolk.gov.uk) or phone 01284 758050 to request a paper copy. We have also written to taxi drivers and operators to seek their views through a similar survey.*

24/07/10

## **Finance & Policies:**

i)

### **Parish Council Bank Reconciliation from list of payments/receipts**

#### **Resolved 24/07/10.01**

The bank balances and reconciliation of payments and receipts were received and adopted and initialled & signed as such by the Vice Chairman (MC), in the absence of the Chair. The bank account balance as of the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024 is £41,968.72.

ii)

### **Cheques for signing and approval and to authorise payment of outstanding invoices**

#### **Resolved 24/07/10.02**

It was agreed to approve payments of outstanding invoices as below and cheques were signed by Cllr. M. Collier and Cllr. Butler.

Mrs V Bright	Salary difference to SO June / Employer NIC contributions / Postage & mileage	002458	£113.03
Mrs D Pott	Litter pickers – Inv 0005/24	002459	£145.09
Mijan Ltd	Internal Audit 23-24	002460	£80.62
Tilbrook's Landscapes	Grass cutting 1 <sup>st</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup> payments	002461	£1,773.90

iii)

### **New Lloyds bank account update**

The Clerk confirmed that the account was now set up, and she is awaiting Online login details and cards/card readers for online banking. She explained that Lloyds will not handle the transfer of funds from Bank of Ireland, nor the changeover of Direct Debits and Standing Orders, because our current account is with Bank of Ireland, so the Clerk is to handle these items upon her return from holiday, she will also do a mandate to add Cllr. Rushman as a signatory at this time too.

24/07/11

i)

### **Councillors Reports and Items for Future Agenda's** **Cllr. P. Butler – Village Hall Update**

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Councillor Butler expressed his regret that two councillors were able to vote down a reasoned request for extra funding for the village hall – an essential village amenity which was affected very badly by the increase in energy prices. He has been the PC's representative on the village hall committee for over nine years and considered his opinion to be an informed one. He was disappointed that the recommendation of the council's own representative was not adopted and that, in his view, the reasons were not made clear.

During the subsequent discussion, Cllr. Butler expressed that in his opinion, having to declare an interest meant he was unable to vote and that this had then failed to secure the VHC the extra funding they had requested, and that it had precluded the best-informed councillor on village hall matters from speaking or voting. He stated that "the Village Hall and Church define the village and if we do not support them, then what are we doing", he has attended every single VHC meeting and has give his time freely, as have the volunteer committee members and Manager of the hall, yet the Council had decided not to take his recommendation, he stated he will now be standing down as the PC representative on the VHC and asked if someone else was willing to do it, he asked the Clerk to add it to the next Agenda. The Clerk clarified the rules and guidance around declaring an interest and explained that as a Trustee of the VHC, not just the PC's representative, then Cllr. Butler did need to express an interest, and as such, could not vote or influence other Cllr's vote on items relating to financial benefit to the Village Hall.

Cllr. Rushman stated that he understood Cllr. Butler's anger and frustration, and that in his case he admits that he wasn't fully aware of the facts when voting on the item, and that as a new Councillor he was unsure what to do, and didn't feel confident voting for the extra £1000, so was led by Cllr. Stewards reasoning and hoped halving the donation made sense and would encourage the VHC to be more economic. He suggested that perhaps the PC could revisit the vote and he would then change his vote. The Clerk clarified at this point that resolutions taken could not be revisited for at least 6 months, this was confirmed as correct by our County/District Councillor, Rebecca Hopfensperger. Cllr. Rushman also enquired whether the hall has an up-to-date EPC and if not, they should get one. The Clerk was asked to formally enquire of the VHC, whether they did have an EPC.

The Clerk reiterated to all Councillors, that if they were unclear of the details when voting on an item, then they should ask for clarification, or deferment until further information could be provided, or alternatively they could abstain from any vote, she also suggested that if Councillor's were unable to hear something or understand something at a meeting, they should ask for clarification at the meeting itself to avoid confusion.

## **Items for future Agenda's**

- Cllr. Rushman asked for the council to consider the Clerk doing the extra module to her CiLCA qualification, to allow the council to have the General Power of Competence, which was introduced after the Clerk had completed her training and qualifications.

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- Appoint a new VHC representative.
- New Lloyds Bank Account Update

Before the meeting closed, Cllr. Collier expressed his desperate sadness of Cllr. Butler stepping down as the PC representative on the VHC. He mentioned that he was sure that Cllr. Steward would be upset that this had happened. He stated that he was grateful for the excellent work and comments over the years by Cllr. Butler in relation to the VHC and asked Cllr. Butler to “give it some thought, although I understand your anger and frustration”. Cllr. Butler agreed to give it more thought in respect to the Vice Chair.

**Date of Next Meeting: Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 7:30pm, in the Fornham St Martin Village Hall, followed by the King George Playing Field Trustee Meeting!**

Meeting closed at 9:18pm

Signed: *J. Borrett*

Date: 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024