

**Fressingfield Parish Council Meeting**  
**Tuesday 18th March 2025 beginning at 7pm Sancroft Hall**  
**Minutes**

Present: Parish councillors Hilary Day (HD), Rachael Troughton (RT), Nick Stolls (NS), Di Warne (DW), Stuart Balmer (SB), Cindy Engel (CE), Tom Lindsay (TL)

Also, in attendance County Councillor Henry Lloyd (HL) for the first part of the meeting and District Councillor Lavinia Hadingham (LH), Clerk - Calvin Edwards (CEd), RFO – Andy Parris & 2 residents of the Parish

Other abbreviations used PC (Parish Council), FC (Finance Committee of the Parish Council)

Apologies from Sharon Wilson (SW)

1	Welcome from the Chair and introductions (2m)	DW welcomed councillors, County Councillor and District Councillor and members of the public
2	To receive reasons for absence and give approval for absences (3m)	Reasons for absence were accepted from SW
3	To receive members' declarations of interest and requests for dispensation (2m)	NS declared his interest as a member of the St Peter & Paul's PCC and SB as Pastor at the Baptist Church – both in item 10F (Venue options)
4	To record details of any lobbying relating to agenda items (2m)	None recorded
5	Public forum – councillors will hear questions or comments from the public on agenda items (15m)	<p>A resident asked if the AECOM report could be produced for public consumption earlier than the public consultation stage as it is a large document. In reference to the NDP review minutes he made a comment about the village health centre being content to take new patients – although the impression he has based on the centre ansaphone message and his experience of getting appointments appears to contradict this statement. He also stated that the list of suggestions for the use of CIL money is 9 months old and that some items that he has suggested do not appear on the list.</p> <p>Paul Woodward addressed the meeting to read a prepared statement about his resignation as Chair of the NDP Review Steering Group. He stated that "Unfortunately serious breaches of</p>



		governance and unfounded allegations have left me with no option but to resign". He also handed out a formal letter of resignation, before leaving the meeting.
6	District Councillor report	A monthly report had been circulated and there were no questions on this. There was a discussion on the District Council's views on devolution. LH concerns were that there are enough councillors to cover villages, and that the people who are representing the local area know the Parishes and remain close enough to be effective.
7	County Councillor report	A monthly report had been circulated – there were no questions on this. HL gave his view on devolution. He wants to see 140 councillors and ensure that area committees and area planning committees remain in place. Councils need to remain close to our communities. One question asked was if there was a concern that major towns would dominate the focus and the funding. It is important that the rural areas voices are heard at the county level. HL stated that various county councillor colleagues perceive the situation differently. HL gave the update that the Suffolk County Council have taken back control of the Libraries after a recent meeting. He also asked if the grant purchases (bench, flag and lanterns) have been made. They have been made but no feedback has been received from the documentation system.
8	<p>A) DC/25/00832   Works to trees in a conservation area - T1 - 1x Young Alder - Remove to ground level Street Farm Barn Cratfield Road Fressingfield Eye Suffolk IP21 5QD</p> <p>B) DC/25/00833   Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area - T1 early semi mature Hornbeam - reduce in height from approximately 9.5m to 6m. T2 - early semi mature Hornbeam - remove to</p>	<p>The Parish Council recommended approval</p> <p>The Parish Council recommended approval</p>



	<p>ground level to avoid any future conflict with buildings in close proximity. Street Farm Cratfield Road Fressingfield Eye Suffolk IP21 5QD</p> <p>Feedback from Odour meeting Fennings Farm : RT/DW (5m)</p> <p>Feedback on planning application De Felbrigge ( DW) (5m)</p>	<p>RT and DW attended this meeting as part of the planning requirements. It was an amicable informative meeting. Fennings Farm will be requesting that these be moved to 6 monthly going forwards.</p> <p>Gemma from planning had phoned DW in response to the PC's letter of complaint about the planning application for De Felbrigge. The matter didn't go to committee as it did not match the criteria. The planning process needs the landowners to prove their ownership if an application is made on someone else's land. Many Councillors and LH agreed that this seemed the wrong way round. There was much discussion concerning many issues that it is felt were not taken into consideration. The application was incorrect in that it should have been retrospective planning that was sought as significant work had already taken place. Councillors stressed that the whole situation with this planning issue has been a series of planning errors and that it would be good if LH could organise a visit with someone from the planning department to see all the concerns first hand. DW asked if LH can check if Gemma has contacted the residents involved to discuss the issues further.</p>
9	<p>To resolve the minutes of previous meetings are correct</p> <p>Full council minutes 18th February 2025 (2m)</p>	<p>It was resolved that the minutes of the full council meeting on the 18th of February 2025 are correct.</p>
10	<p>Issues updated, not covered elsewhere in agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update on PFMC (SB)</li> </ul>	<p>SB has been involved in 2 meetings – 1 full and one sub-team – the process is gaining traction to get to the full legal situation between individual groups and the PFMC. This process is ongoing but progress is being made. The Chairman of the PFMC is asking for the PC position on whether the SPSC should apply</p>



	<p>directly to the PC for funds. There was a discussion about how to save VAT on any work undertaken and it was decided that if the PC was involved at the beginning of the process – it would be possible for the PC to recover VAT on behalf of the SPSC. This would mean obtaining new quotes for the work. CIL money has not yet been opened up to applications but the SPSC are able to apply to PC in the normal way for a grant.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stradbroke CLT meeting (DW)</li> </ul>	<p>DW and CE were unable to attend this meeting – if the PC is asked again then they will attend future meetings to understand more about this group.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Parish Meeting discussion &amp; update (CEd, CE, HD)</li> </ul>	<p>28 groups/people have been approached – 8 have replied with 7 attending to date A 2<sup>nd</sup> email will be sent soon to those who have not yet responded. A banner has been displayed – posters are being printed and will be on the PC boards. Some will be laminated to go on outside boards.</p> <p>Refreshments will be available on the evening. The PC will get some information together to inform the community of things achieved this year. Practical arrangements for tables and display boards were discussed.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website progress (CEd)</li> </ul>	<p>CE &amp; CEd met to discuss a new simplified structure to the website. The work for this is underway and is hoping to be ready to release for the APM on the 15<sup>th</sup> April. CE will be doing some re-wording on the PC side of the site initially. Councillors were asked to provide a photograph and a 2 sentence biography that can be used on the site to inform the community who their councillors are.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parish liaison meeting 10/03/25 with MSDC - Devolution (DW &amp; CEd)</li> </ul>	<p>DW informed the council of the key elements from this meeting. It was concerning the government consultation for the Mayoral position for Norfolk &amp; Suffolk. The Mayor will have 4 representatives. 2 from Norfolk &amp; 2 from Suffolk. There will also be associate members appointed with no voting rights. The Mayor will probably first gain responsibility for</p>



	<p>transport then planning, energy, education. They will have a budget. There is an overlap with unitary authorities which is probably something the PC is more concerned with.</p> <p>The costs for using Sancroft Hall for PC meetings were provided at £300, with an alternative option being the Baptist Church rooms (£725).</p> <p>The Baptist Church has improved accessibility and also has screens and an internet connection for Tech displays. It also has the benefit of improved parking facilities especially in the summer. These details will be discussed and a vote taken at the next full council PC meeting in May</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2025/2026 meeting venue options (CEd)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wakeelyns update (DW)</li> </ul> <p>This is moving forward for changing the constitution and RT and DW are still involved and could become founding members representing the PC. This has been checked with SALC and means that any interests would need to be declared for any matters brought to the PC.</p> <p>NS asked for a paper to describe the situation so this can be reviewed and brought to the next meeting for PC approval.</p>
11	<p>Policy update (CEd)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GDPR + assoc. docs (10m)</li> </ul>
12	<p>Recruitment for new councillor/s – timing? All (5m)</p> <p>It was discussed that the PC are short of councillors and need to start the recruitment process. The Annual Parish Meeting will be used to advertise for new councillors. The District Council will advertise that there are vacancies and ask for nominations. If there are no nominations then it will come back to the council for the Co-Option process.</p>
13	<p>NDP Steering Group Feedback (DW) (5m)</p> <p>Paul Woodward has resigned as Chairman – as per the agenda item 5 above. The PC would strongly encourage a non-PC member of the steering group to take the Chair or Vice Chair. This will be the first item on the steering group next meeting agenda to elect a Chair to replace Paul Woodward.</p> <p>The Household survey is now ready to be posted in the next few days. This can be</p>

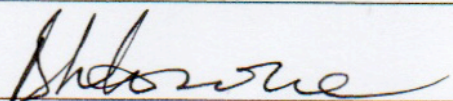


		<p>completed online or given in to the village shop and needs to be completed by April 7<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>NS mentioned that all financial spending for the NDP review needs to be accounted for as it is the end of the financial year. Any unspent grant will be returned and will be applied for again for the next fiscal year.</p>
14	Chair's Report (DW) (5m)	The report was circulated before the meeting and is on the website. The report was discussed there were no questions from councillors
15	Clerk's Probationary period (DW) (2m)	DW confirmed that the Probationary period of 3 months had been completed successfully for CEd the clerk who has been in position for 3 months.
16	Clerk's Report (CEd) (5m)	The report was circulated before the meeting and is on the website. The report was discussed there were no questions from councillors
17	<p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To approve payments and acknowledge receipts</li> <li>Cllrs to confirm that balances on the bank statements match those on the reconciliation statement – February 2025</li> <li>To accept the bank reconciliation statement - February 2025</li> <li>Report from the Chair of the Finance Committee</li> </ul>	<p>Council accepted the bank reconciliation for February 2025</p> <p>Council accepted the bank statements for February 2025</p> <p>Council accepted the February 2025 reconciliation statement</p> <p>Finance committee approved a grant of £599 to FLHAG for a laptop for meetings and archive. Noted that in the AGAR <u>should</u> have become <u>must</u>.</p> <p>There is a documents list that <u>must be</u> on the website. The FC recommends that PC replies YES to all AGAR statements. This was agreed by the Council and will be signed at the next Full Parish Council meeting in May.</p> <p>The Assets register was reviewed – New equipment for splitting the RFO and Clerk roles. We appear to have 1 less bench than is</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review and refine the council's internal controls of it's procedures</li> <li>Statement of internal controls</li> <li>Cllr RT commentary on review of internal controls</li> <li>2025 Audit (AP)</li> <li>To discuss the Street Lighting Contract (AP)</li> <li>Garry Deeks Legacy Fund – currently The Fressingfield Community Fund (NS)</li> </ul> <p>(25m)</p>	<p>on the register – this needs checking with the village caretaker.</p> <p>FC suggests that the PC approves the Statement of Internal Controls after the review carried out by the FC.</p> <p>This was approved by the PC. They are confident that the internal controls are robust. Both the statement and the review by the FC will be posted online.</p> <p>RT had made commentary on the review as someone independent from the FC.</p> <p>The AGAR documents have not yet been received so cannot be signed. Generally procedures are being tightened as <u>Should</u> now becomes Must. The PC has seen and acknowledged the SALC letter of engagement.</p> <p>Pearce &amp; Kemp's 3-year street light maintenance contract expires in March a new contract has been sent at the same rate as the previous contract. The PC agreed and Chair signed this contract.</p> <p>Because the fund was held by the Parish Council but had no official status it needs to go into Garry Deeks' estate for probate. Therefore we will await whatever decisions are made in that process.</p>
19	Urgent items to be brought to this meeting :	A resident had raised the issue of cars being parked on the road beside the war memorial. This has been noted by the Parish Council and will be raised as an issue directly with the Highways department.
20	Future items :	
21	To confirm the dates of next meetings :	Annual Parish Meeting on April 15 <sup>th</sup> at Baptist Church Next Full Council Meeting on Tuesday 6th May 2025 7pm Sancroft Hall were both confirmed
The meeting closed at 9:33pm		

Chair



Date:

6/5/25