



Minutes of a hybrid meeting of Fressingfield Parish Council held in Sancroft Hall, Fressingfield on Tuesday 2nd April 2024 at 7pm.

Present Parish councillors Stuart Balmer, Hilary Day, Garry Deeks, Tom Lindsay, Rachael Troughton and Di Warne.

Also in attendance: Andy Parris, clerk to the council and responsible financial officer (RFO).

- 1 Cllr DW chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone, particularly Steve Blackman-Cross. He is to take over as clerk and RFO on 1st May. He attended as an observer. It was agreed that Cllr HD would chair future finance committee meetings. It was agreed that Cllr RT would act as the Vice-Chair of the council.
- 2 The council received an explanation for his absence from Cllr N Stolls. The council accepted the explanation.
- 3 There were no declarations of interest in agenda items.
- 4 Councillors had not received any lobbying connected to an agenda item.
- 5 Minutes of the previous meetings
 - 1 It was resolved that the minutes of the hybrid council meeting on 05/03/2024 are correct.
 - 2 Actions and progress since the last meeting not covered in reports:
 - a The sustainability forum held on 17/02/2024. Cllr GD presented a [report](#) to the council summarising discussions. The council agreed that it was an accurate summary of individuals' contributions in the different discussion groups. GD was congratulated and thanked for the work in organising the forum. The council agreed that the paper would be a useful reference document in future meetings. For example, any discussions around the review of the neighbourhood development plan (NDP). The paper will be put on the council's pages of the parish website.
Clerk to arrange for report to be put on the website.
 - b GD reported back on a meeting held locally with officers from Babergh Mid Suffolk District Council (BMSDC). A senior officer for planning gave details of the progress on part two of BMSDC Local Plan, advising parish councils of the importance of a locally based housing needs survey. The council decided to take professional advice on ways of conducting such a survey. **GD to write a summary of the meeting.**
 - c Following on from previous discussions, the parish council decided to site a dog waste bin at the junction of the public footpath and Gules Green Lane. ([What3Words reference ///admits.declining.takeovers](#)). This will mean that there are bins at most places where a public footpath comes out onto a road.
 - d Councillors had received thanks from residents for the new dog waste bins that have been provided in the last few weeks.
 - e Thanks had also been received for the cycle repair station that has been installed next to the old telephone box near Sancroft Hall. The funds for this came from BMSDC.
Clerk to arrange for accessibility report to be circulated to full council.

- 6 The public forum – no members of the public were present.
- 7 Planning Applications
 - 1 DC/24/01117 Householder Application - Erection of close boarded fencing at Carrobelle, Laxfield Road, Fressingfield, IP21 5TD. The council decided to recommend approval of this application.
 - 2 DC/24/01106 Householder Application - Construction of external thermal efficiency insulation boards. The Old Forge, New Street, Fressingfield. IP21 5PG. The council decided to recommend approval of this application.
- 8 Finance
 - 1 Cllrs HD and GD confirmed that the vouchers, with invoices where appropriate, and receipts were accurately recorded on the payment and receipts summary sheet. This included a recommendation from the RFO to transfer £4,500 from the investment account to the current account. The council decided to make £1,000 available for a review of the NDP, if needed. The council decided not to use neighbourhood community infrastructure levy (CIL) for any costs associated with a review of the NDP. **NS to investigate grants available for reviewing the NDP.**
 - 2 The council agreed to make the payments and acknowledge the receipts as shown on the summary. **Online authorisation to be completed by Cllrs TL and NS**
 - 3 The council received advice from the finance committee on the annual governance and accountability return (AGAR), section 1. The council confirmed that all assertions relevant to Fressingfield Parish Council (nos. 1-8) on the AGAR section 1 are true. Assertion 9 does not apply to Fressingfield.
 - 4 Councillors discussed the report from the RFO. The report can be seen by following [this link](#). The council decided to make a donation of £125 to Fressingfield Primary School. This is to help improve safety on the roads around the school.
- 9 The council discussed an approach to beginning a review of the NDP. Following on from her discussions with the council and some residents, Ms A Long advised that the initial step was a technical one best carried out by an experienced planner. She called this a scoping exercise. She explained it to councillors with a description of what would be involved. The council agreed with her assessment that a professional would best carry out this scoping exercise. The council decided to use AL to do this as she was the adviser who helped the council draw up the original plan. She will be asked to write a report for the council, based on her assessments in the scoping exercise, to include advice on what to do next. **Clerk to contact AL about the scoping exercise.**
- 10 The council considered how to improve communication between the council and the parishioners. There was a discussion about how outlets other than the website and noticeboards could be used to hear what residents want from the council and for the council to explain more fully what it can and cannot do. It was decided that suggestions boxes be set up for parishioners' queries and there would be a revised set-up of the council stall at the community markets. Cllr HD and CE would investigate the possibilities of setting up a council Facebook page and a format for a FAQs page. All councillors would be involved in contributing to this initially.



HD and CE continue to investigate improvement in communications. RFO to buy suggestions boxes.

- 11 Councillors received a report from
 - 1 [the Chair](#) There were no questions about the report.
 - 2 [the clerk](#) There were no questions about the report.
- 12 The council reviewed the following policies: co-option, grievance and disciplinary. It was decided to make no changes to any of these.
- 13 The council confirmed the dates for meetings in April, as per the schedule already published – 16/04/24 Annual Parish Meeting, 7pm in Fressingfield Baptist Chapel; 18/04/24 Finance Committee, 2pm in Sancroft Hall; 25/04/24 Full Council meeting, 7pm in Sancroft Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 9.20pm.

Signed:

Chair

Date

Action points from 02/04/24

Agenda Item	Action	Who?
05.2 a	Put report from Sustainability Forum on website	clerk, website manager
05.2 b	Write summary of meeting with MSDC officers for rest of PC	GD
05.2 e	Accessibility report circulated to full council	clerk, NS
08.1	Investigate what grants are available for NDP reviews	NS? or HD
08.2	Authorise online payments	TL, NS
09	Contact AL rescoping exercise	clerk
10	Continue to investigate improvements in communications. Buy suggestions/questions boxes.	HD, CE RFO

Ongoing Action Points

Original meeting	Action	Who
05/03/2024	Obtain equipment for Church Street gritters	clerk
05/12/2023	Does permissive footpath onto Buckingham's Hill require a barrier?	councillors
12/2022	Update PC documents on CIL	NS
01/2022	Circulate the final draft of the emergency plan	GD
12/2021	Discuss with landowner planting of trees on Harleston Hill	GD