

1) Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 16th August 2023 at 19.00 at Felmingham Village Hall

2) Present

Chairman Tim Papworth, Vice Chairman Neil Thrush, Cllr. John Newstead, Cllr. Des Fern, Cllr. Syd Arksey, District Councillor Peter Netherway, Duncan Baker MP, Lyn and Rob Walker, Carol Coughtry, Rev. David Chamberlain

3) Welcome

Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed all that were there.

4) Apologies

- a) Cllr. Saul Penfold

5) Minutes

a) AGM 10th May 2023

- i) There were no matters arising.
- ii) The minutes were signed as an accurate record of the meeting by the Chairman.

b) Ordinary Meeting 10th May 2023

- i) There were no matters arising.
- ii) The minutes were signed as an accurate record of the meeting by the Chairman.

6) Heaths

a) Bryants Heath

- i) Neil Thrush informed the meeting that no work will be done during the summer months to protect the wildlife activity except for path clearance.
- ii) The hydrological lease has finally been sorted. The legal costs contribution of £750 and £600 for the rent should be in the bank account in the next few days. Outstanding paperwork reference charity status etc should be sent to the Parish clerk and a copy to Neil Thrush also within the next few days.
- iii) Peter Frizzel, who used to clear undergrowth etc on the heath, is advising Natural England about clearance. Natural England might fund up to £6000 for clearance work.
- iv) The Clan Trust have donated another £500 towards general maintenance costs.
- v) Conservation work will start again in October.
- vi) A fungi survey is to be carried out in November.
- vii) The Chairman gave Peter Netherway and Duncan Baker a quick background on the heaths and the Clan Trust.

b) Stow Heath

- i) The Felbeck Trust are doing some work on Stow Heath.
- ii) Tim Papworth has recycled a gate to replace the old one at the entrance to the heath.
- iii) The Clerk suggested that she should contact the Felbeck Trust a couple of weeks prior to each Parish Council meeting to obtain an update from them. This was agreed.

7) Allotments

- a) Norfolk County Council have suggested an increase of 33% on the annual rent being paid for the allotments, referred to as Felmingham Estate by NCC. Although the rents being charged to the tenant holders is considered to be on the low side, it was felt that this was an unreasonable increase given the quality of the land, drainage and lack of water supply. The Chairman is going to try and negotiate this proposed increase. The Clerk has been asked to give the NCC contact details to Peter Netherway to see if he can help.
- b) Complaints have been made about a number of tenants who are not maintaining their allotment plots in accordance with their tenancy agreements. The Clerk was asked to write to them requesting them to tidy up or give their plots up as we have a number of people on the waiting list.
- c) Neil Thrush to be paid the £25 deposit from Scott Berry's vacated plot to reimburse his time and costs involved in clearing it ready for the next tenant.
- d) There have been a number of incidents of vandalism on the allotments involving broken greenhouse glass. The police have been informed and advice taken. The problem appears to have stopped for the moment.

8) Highways

- a) Nothing to report.

9) Planning

- a) The lack of progress on the planning application for The Old Rectory is of concern to the Parish Council and Peter Netherway was asked if he could find out anything prior to the meeting. It would appear that the District Council is still waiting for various reports before the application can be progressed.

10) Village Hall Update

- a) Syd Arksey gave the following update:-
 - i) Currently running at a profit of £1250.
 - ii) Hirings are up, but mostly from outside the village.
 - iii) Dance classed starting in September through to December
 - iv) Funding being sought for refitting the kitchen.
 - v) New play equipment has been installed in the empty field courtesy of The Bartrum Trust.

11) RFO and Clerk's Report

- a) The bank balance stood at £3995 at the end of July 2023.
- b) Bank signatories should have been sorted out and paperwork should be with the Clerk in a few days. The three signatories will be Tim Papworth, Neil Thrush and Christine Westlake. Once this has been finalised, the Clerk will then move the Parish Council to online banking.

12) Any other business

- a) Duncan Baker MP, addressed the meeting
 - i) He thanked the Parish Council and the Clerk for their invaluable work serving their community
 - ii) Speeding – there is to be a meeting in North Walsham towards the end of September where he will be tabling the proposal that community speed watch will be given legal powers to escalate captured, evidenced speeding offences maybe through the police, to not just issuing letters but fines to try and deter would be offenders. This could also be extended to evidence gathered through the SAM cameras.
 - iii) NHS – winter pressures, closure of re-enablement centres such as Benjamin Court in Cromer are creating conditions for “the perfect storm”. These will be partly mitigated by the use of Artificial Intelligence (dispensing robots to speed up the discharge process in hospitals) and technology to enable virtual wards (patients being monitored at home whilst recovering). Concern was raised that, although in theory, this may be part of the solution, North Norfolk still has unreliable infrastructure serving mobile phones and broadband connection and that these issues must be taken into consideration as part of any proposed roll out of this technological solution.
 - iv) Dentistry – Recruitment and retention is a huge problem especially in rural areas such as North Norfolk. Various ideas have been put forward, but the key message was if you have a private dentist, do not try to change, even if you move.
 - v) Banks – most branches are closing down. Banking hubs have been proposed as has the use of the Post Offices. Some limited success in that Lloyds in North Walsham has had a reprieve of 6 months.
- b) A memorial bench for John Gouldsmith will be discussed at the meeting in October.
- c) Meeting closed at 9pm. Next meeting will be on 18th October 2023

Signed by Chairman

Date