

**Minutes of the Meeting of Fressingfield Parish Council  
held in the Sancroft Hall, Fressingfield  
on Tuesday 15 September 2015**

**Present:** Prue Rush; Garry Deeks; Philip Eastgate; Judy Fullam; Crispin Muir; Malcolm Roberts; Ian Smith; Malcolm Ward; Dave Wheeler; Keith Wykes

**In Attendance:** Cllr Lavinia Hadingham; Carol A Smy (Clerk)

32 members of the public attended most of whom left after the planning section of the meeting

***Public Forum:** the question of Councillors maintaining an independent stance on topics under discussion was asked. The Chairman assured everyone that all Councillors adhered to the Suffolk Code of Conduct. Ian Smith addressed the meeting on the subject of his planning application that was to be considered during the appropriate section of the agenda.*

**15.1 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting**

**15.2 Apologies for absence were received from: Caroline Day; Warren Last; Peter Vincent; Cllr Guy McGregor; PCSO Steve Long**

**15.3 Members' Declarations of Interest** – there were none at this time

**15.4 Dispensations** – there were no requests

**15.5 The Minutes of Last Meeting** – 21 July 2015; approved unanimously by those who had been present and signed. Prop: GD; seconded: MR.

**15.6 Housing Needs Survey/Parish Plan update**

The analysis had been completed and circulated to members. The initial results clearly demonstrated a requirement for affordable housing in the village. There were no further comments to forward to Sunila Osborne but the Clerk was to ask her to present her report as soon as possible, ideally, to the full Council. The response rate of around 30% was somewhat disappointing, particularly in view of the forthcoming planning proposals.

**15.7 To consider any Planning Matters including:**

***Report on the open meeting held on 14 September 2015 to showcase the two planning applications discussed at this evening's meeting:** the turnout for the presentation was good. Overall, the organisation of the event was deemed poor and unprofessional. The Chairman and Clerk had been given to understand that the presentation would cover more than just the two proposals already displayed at earlier events and the other plans were included as a result of pressure from the Chairman. The whole thing seemed more of a box-ticking event than an information one. A report was awaited.*

**15.7.1 Applications for consideration at this meeting:**

0846/15 hybrid application comprising: application for full detailed planning permission for the erection of a new Baptist Chapel, car parking and access & an application for outline planning permission for up to 18 residential units

***Land south West of School Lane***

*This application was discussed in great detail and the main stumbling block was the design of the chapel. There was little feeling against the overall proposition. JF proposed recommending approval and this was seconded by KW. 4 members voted for the proposal (JF,KW,MR, MW) 4 against (CM,PE,GD, DW) and the Chairman abstained; IS had declared a personal interest and took no part in the discussion and did not vote. As the vote was tied the Chairman gave her casting vote against approval. It was stressed that design was the main reason for voting against approval by those who had taken that stance (bar PE) and all members (bar PE) supported some development.*

2285/15 Full Planning Permission: erection of new Scout Headquarters with associated facilities and new access road outline Planning Permission: erection of 30 new dwellings with all matters reserved (accept the new road access to serve the properties)

***Land and buildings at Red House Farm, Priory Road***

*Again, a lengthy discussion took place. There was much support for the Scout Headquarters but not at the price of so much housing. It was stressed that New Street could not cope with such a potential increase in traffic volumes when it was a bottle-neck at current levels. DW proposed refusal of the application, seconded by KW. MR abstained, CM took no part in the discussion and did not vote (personal interest declared) all others supported the proposal to recommend refusal.*

3009/15 conversion of agricultural building to additional accommodation to The Farmhouse, Tithe Farm

***Tithe Farm, Laxfield Road***

*Unanimous approval was recommended for the above application*

**15.7.2 Applications considered at previous planning meetings:**

***Approval recommended***

2220/15 erection of two storey extension to side of dwelling and single storey extension to rear of dwelling. Erection of garage/car port (retention of). Rendering of existing building including attached property  
*1 & 2 Lawn Farm Cottage Metfield Lane*

2290/15 erection of two storey extension to side of dwelling and single storey extension to rear of dwelling. Erection of garage/car port (retention of). Rendering of existing building, including attached property.  
*1 & 2 Lawn Farm Cottage Metfield Lane*

2411/15 Silver Birch (T1) – fell; Silver Birch (T2&3) – reduce by 30%; Willow (T4) – reduce by 30 %  
*Woodlands, 2 Angel Pightle*

2781/15 erection of two storey dwelling with garage (renewal of planning application 1960/12)  
*Plot adjacent Providence House, Church Street*

**Refusal recommended:**

2526/15 erection of single storey dwelling following demolition of existing outbuilding  
*Land to the rear of the Old Post Office, Church Street*

2014/15 Option 1: outline planning permission for erection of one detached dwelling. Creation of shared vehicular access  
*Belle Vue, Harleston Hill*

2325/15 Option 2: outline planning permission for erection of pair of semi-detached dwellings. Creation of shared vehicular access  
*Belle Vue, Harleston Hill*

**15.7.3 Notification of decisions reached by MSDC:**

**Approval was granted for the following applications which had approval recommended at previous meetings:**

2083/15 erection of single storey rear extension (following demolition of existing conservatory). Replace side extension roof with dual –pitched roof. Change external finish of existing dwelling to painted render form face brickwork.  
*1 Lawn Farm Cottage, Metfield Lane*

2220/15 erection of two storey extension to side of dwelling and single storey extension to rear of dwelling. Erection of garage/car port (retention of). Rendering of existing building including attached property  
*1 & 2 Lawn Farm Cottage Metfield Lane*

2290/15 erection of two storey extension to side elevation  
*2 Victoria Terrace*

2526/15 erection of single storey dwelling following demolition of existing outbuilding  
*Land to the rear of the Old Post Office, Church Street*

3167/15 non-material amendment following grant of planning permission 0931/15 (erection of a single storey rear extension) to change a window to rear elevation to pair of French doors  
*21 Broadway*

**15.7.4 Other Planning Matters:**

15.7.4.i The Clerk had been asked to enquire of the Planning Department as to the removal of a chimney at Jubilee Cottage during the recent building of the extension. The property is not listed and so the chimney could be removed without planning approval, even though the house is within the conservation area and the removal of the chimney did not feature in the planning application.

15.7.4.ii There was no report on information on land reserves by Lavinia Hadingham but she was able to confirm that MSDC had 57 properties in its ownership in Fressingfield.

15.7.4.iii The Clerk was asked to consult Philip Isbell of MSDC Planning Department as to there being any purpose in conducting a Parish Plan from the point of view of planning in the village ie would such a plan carry any weight when/if large scale developments were to be put forward

**15.8 Matters of Report:**

15.8.1 **Benches and Notice Boards** – ongoing

15.8.2 **Dog bins** – dog waste bin installed on Priory Road, at the start of the footpath. Attaching the second to the footpath post at Post Mill Lane was not possible as this was private land and permission was not forthcoming. Opposite the Old School or on the right hand side of the entrance to Post Mill Lane were the most likely alternatives. These would be investigated. It was brought to the attention of the meeting that Mendham had installed the dog equivalent of cattle grids to impede access to the Playing Field. These had been well received.

15.8.3 **Defibrillator** – BS could not install the casing as an electrician’s advice was required. The back board was not suitable for painting so an extra panel would be required. An electrician had been sourced and would examine the site as soon as possible.

15.8.4 **Speed Indicator signs** – the subject of mobile speed indicator signs (such as those seen in Hoxne) was raised at a recent Planning Committee meeting. The Highways Department sent an information document (previously circulated) to assist the PC in its deliberations. CM was to research costs. **CM to action**

15.8.5 **Training courses** – the two recently attended SALC training courses had proved informative and beneficial. A training event would be organised for the full Council to take place in-house, preferably on a planning evening.

### **15.9 To receive the Financial Report & Approval of Accounts for Payment:**

15.9.1 Approval of accounts for payment – cheques as per appended sheet – prop MR; seconded IS; unanimous

15.9.2 Account balances at 31 August 2015:

Current account: £20,457.16

Tracker account: £19,790.53

There were unrepresented cheques totalling: £128.80

Balance at 31 August 2015: £40,118.89

15.9.3 Annual Audit – this had been completed. There were some issues arising: the Council held a reserve for the payment of a gratuity to the Clerk (this was in lieu of pension provision – applicable at the time of the Clerk's appointment but which is no longer legal). It was recommended the Council seeks legal advice prior to making any payment as the arrangements may have been made void by the 2011 regulations; the fixed assets had been included at valuation rather than cost which had been corrected; the level of the fidelity guarantee had, once again, been raised and the position clarified. The Notice of Conclusion of Audit had been posted on the notice board for the required length of time. Members unanimously approved the Annual Return.

15.9.4 Banking – the documents for a change of bank had been sent to Unity Trust Bank and the change would be effected following the clearance of the cheques signed at this meeting and submission of further documents.

15.9.5 Internal Audit Report – GD and MR had conducted an internal audit on the PC's accounts on 07 September 2015 paying particular attention to Earmarked Reserves and Receipts and Payments. Some consideration was given to the ownership of the Playingfield, the general level of Reserves and some observations from the External Auditors via their report. The reserves held by the PC were felt to be necessary and had identified focus as planned expenditure. Some, however, await the outcomes of proposed developments in the village, including play area contributions. Other funds held for known eventualities could be usefully employed, including the Street Lighting upgrades, anti-speed measures and other Parish projects. Reserves held for the Clerk's gratuity were appropriate but would need a different provision to be in place on any new clerk's appointment. Levels of reserve were sound but further use of this funding for projects was encouraged.

Receipts and Payments trails were followed and found correct and within procedures and practice.

Consideration of reserves led to the consideration of assets held by the Parish Council, namely the Playingfield. The arrangements between the Playingfield Management Committee and the Sports and Social Club were developing and an opportunity for clarifying ownership and responsibilities may be sought to promote clarity and understanding.

Some presentation points were made to reduce printed papers and enhance clarity of information.

The Clerk was congratulated on the precision and scope of the accounts as presented.

**15.10 Emergency Planning** – GD was planning to attend a conference in October and would report at a later date.

### **15.11 Street Lighting**

Revised quotation for replacement with LEDs circulated at the July meeting. MR had been in consultation with Pearce and Kemp and was informed that all the lights owned by the PC were 20/25 years old, the SOX were hard to replace and parts very expensive. All 15 could be replaced at a cost of circa £300 each and the LEDs were guaranteed for 10 years. It was unanimously agreed, in principle, that the lights should be changed after more detailed costings had been received.

**MR to action**

### **15.12 To receive reports from the County & District Councillors and the Community Beat Officer:**

15.12.1 County Councillor – Cllr McGregor had submitted a brief report which came too late to be read out at the meeting: The initial target of (broadband) provision to premises has been reached and the next contract is about to be let. At the end of November SCC will be able to identify provision on an address basis (currently by Post Code). There will be an open meeting on a Divisional basis in early December.

15.12.2 District Councillor - Cllr Haddingham gave a very thorough report on happenings at MSDC since the last meeting. A new Monitoring Officer had been appointed, a revised Tenancy Agreement had been approved, a new recommendation for public speaking at Planning Committees was adopted and members were appointed

to represent the Council on outside bodies. Reports were presented by the Leader of the Council, the executive Committee and Portfolio Holders. A recommendation was received for approval to amend the Treasury Management Strategy for 2015/16 enabling the Council to make investments that will generate additional revenue. The Head of Corporate Resources was content with the proposal. LH had been appointed to HomeStart and she was appointed to the Joint Gypsy and Traveller Steering Group. A Devolution Working Group had been established to investigate the levels of interest in devolution among public sector organisations.

Following the report Cllr Hadingham was asked if she might make future reports more pertinent to Fressingfield. She agreed to forward her full report to the Clerk in advance of future meetings, so that it could be circulated with the agenda, and then present a directed precis to the meeting.

15.12.3 Police – PCSO Long’s written report was as follows: there had been one reported crime since the last meeting, a malicious communications offence which had been dealt with. There would no longer be a Police presence at PC meetings unless there was an urgent need. This was due to the ever decreasing number of Police Officers and PCSOs.

### **15.13 Social Club**

15.13.1 minutes of the July and August meetings noted

### **15.14 Playingfield Management Committee**

15.14.1 **Report** - written report received which stated the painting of the outside of the club house was delayed by bad weather. Hopefully this would go ahead very soon. The annual inspection of the play area had taken place. The Parish Council was thanked for removing the " bouncing duck" which had been deemed unsafe. In the minutes of the last PC meeting it had been reported that a group had expressed an interest in applying for grants to renovate the play area but the FPMC has not been given any information about this offer.

The Sports & Social and Management committee were organising a meeting on 5th. Oct. at 7.30 at the club house to discuss the possibility of holding a Village Fete in 2016. A notice would appear in 6 Sense and posters would be put around the village.

15.14.2 **Marquees** – it had been confirmed that the marquees were managed by the FPMC and covered by that insurance, with public liability insurance for their use. The terms of the hiring out of these should be in the grant details which we understand Garry Deeks would be passing on to. There were instructions for the erection of the marquees and a volunteer willing to find helpers to put them up.

### **15.15 Play Area**

15.15.1 following the RoSPA inspection the FPMC had been advised that the springy was unsafe. This was checked and the equipment was, indeed, coming away from its fixings. It was impossible to secure or to remove without damage so the piece was removed and disposed of.

15.15.1.i the Clerk had contacted the resident concerning the Play Area and to see if there was any interest in attending a management and inspection course at Rushmere St Andrew on 16 October.

15.15.1.ii results of consultation on 14 September 2015 (as part of the development presentation) illustrated types of equipment residents thought most needed in the village. Members have expressed the view that the result of the planning applications should be awaited before putting any plans in train to renew/refurbish play equipment. There is s106 funding available for play areas, pitches and outdoor sports.

### **15.16 Road Safety**

15.16.1 The Clerk had spoken with her contact at the Highways Department on the possibility of a barrier that would prevent accidents but would also permit use by those with strollers/wheelchairs. It was not the type of project that would be generally considered for funding from the Highways budget so the PC would have to be prepared to bear the cost, details of which have not yet been forthcoming. This would be considered once costs had been ascertained.

### **15.17 Correspondence**

15.17.1 PC copied into a letter from the PCC to SCC Highways concerning the potholes on the Weybread Straight and weeds around Chapel Close

15.17.2 Letter of thanks from the Methodist Church for the 2015/16 grant of £200

15.17.3 Copy of letter to Planning Department ref: Belle Vue

15.17.4 Invitation to the Mid Suffolk CAB AGM

15.17.5 Course on Playpark management and inspection to be held in Rushmere St Andrew on 16 October

15.17.6 Letter from resident concerning the safety of the equipment in the Playpark. The Clerk has not received a copy of the RoSPA report so cannot compare the contents of letter with report. Will request a copy from the FPMC

15.17.7 Letter from SARS requesting a donation

15.17.8 Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch Association General Meeting. All welcome but places need to be reserved

15.17.9 Consultations open on the Licensing Act and Gambling Act

**Tabled items: Broxap catalogue;**

### **15.18 To Receive the Clerk's Report**

15.18.1 At a recent SLCC meeting the Clerk was discussing the Transparency Code with colleagues. As the Council's income is under £25,000pa draft minutes should be posted on the website within 2 weeks of the meeting.

15.18.2 Received from MSDC: two consultations on The Licensing Act and The Gambling Act. Comments, if any, on both by 19 October 2015

15.18.3 The Clerk wished to attend the SLCC National Conference in October. Members were content with this despite the increased cost.

15.18.4 The Clerk will be unavailable at the time scheduled for the November meeting. Members agreed to bring the meeting forward to 20 October (a date scheduled for planning) and the Finance and General Purposes Working Party would meet to draft the budget on 13 October. The change of date would be clearly advertised in 6Sense

15.18.5 It had come to the Clerk's notice that her contract was out of date from the point of view of leave allocation and had not been updated when statutory considerations changed in 2011. On appointment four weeks leave (plus Bank Holidays) were contracted to (20 days); 21 days was the NALC agreed figure from 2009 (plus four days for completion of five years' continuous service) and this has been the accepted norm. However, the number of statutory days should have been increased in 2011 to 23. This gives 8 days paid leave owed up to this year. The Council agreed, unanimously, that rather than the Clerk taking the outstanding days as leave it would be acceptable for her to be paid for the outstanding hours.

### **15.19 Matters of Information brought by the Chairman or Members:**

15.19.1 it was noted that the provision of allotments had featured in the HNS. This would be an agenda item for the next meeting

15.19.2 overgrown hedges were causing something of a nuisance and the Clerk was asked to contact the relevant householders

15.19.3 concern was raised at the possibilities for future development should the APPLICATIONS FOR THE Chapel and Scout HQ proceed.

**There being no further business the meeting was closed at 22.30hrs**

One of the remaining members of the public commented on the darkness of New Street between the Methodist Chapel and Post Mill Lane and wondered if a street light could be erected in that area. This would be investigated.

**Clerk to action**

Signed: *PL Rush*  
Chairman

**13 October 2015**