

**Minutes of the Meeting of Fressingfield Parish Council
held in the Sancroft Hall, Fressingfield
on Tuesday 20 October 2015**

Present: Prue Rush; Caroline Day; Garry Deeks; Philip Eastgate; Judy Fullam; Warren Last; Malcolm Roberts; Ian Smith; Malcolm Ward; Dave Wheeler; Keith Wykes

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

No members of the public attended

Public Forum: *the issue of speeding tractors was brought to the attention of the Council. Earlier in the day (of the meeting) a tractor and trailer -travelling at speed- had had a near miss on Laxfield Road. The verge outside Mulberry Cottage had been badly damaged. It was pointed out that the hedge to the property on the opposite side of the road to Mulberry Cottage was encroaching onto the highway and needed to be cut back. The Clerk would report it to the Highways Department for action as the property owner was absent.*

15.1 Chairman's welcome

15.2 Apologies for absence were received and accepted from: Peter Vincent; Crispin Muir

15.3 Members' Declarations of Interest – there were none

15.4 Dispensations – there were no requests

15.5 The Minutes of Last Meeting – 15 September 2015; approved unanimously (ex those not in attendance at that meeting) and signed. Prop:GD; seconded WL

15.6 Housing Needs Survey/Parish Plan update

15.6.1 The meeting should have been addressed by Sunila Osborne of Community Action Suffolk who had analysed the data provided by the HNS. Unfortunately, she was indisposed and could not attend. The final report was not changed from the draft that had been circulated to all Members. The Clerk had asked that SO attend the planning meeting to be held on 03 Nov 15 and give Members her results then. Members agreed they would prefer to have a final analysis rather than rely on the draft. **TBC**

15.6.2.i Results of the public meeting held in the Sancroft Hall on 14 September 2015 had been circulated to Members

15.6.2.ii Comments received as above on play equipment provision

15.6.2 The Clerk had been informed that MSDC had 57 properties in Fressingfield

15.7 To consider any Planning Matters including:

15.7.1 Applications for consideration at this meeting:

3282/15 application for outline planning permission for the erection of a detached bungalow

The Cottage, Church Street

Approval was recommended by a majority vote (1 abstention) for the above application. Prop: MR; seconded MW

15.7.2 Applications considered at previous planning meetings:

Approval recommended:

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

Tithe Farm, Laxfield Road

Refusal recommended:

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

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

15.7.3 Notification of decisions reached by MSDC:

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

2411/15 Silver Birch (T1) – fell; Silver Birch (T2&3) – reduce by 30%; Willow (T4) – reduce by 30 %

Woodlands, 2 Angel Pighile

2781/15 erection of two storey dwelling with garage (renewal of planning application 1960/12)

Plot adjacent Providence House, Church Street

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

Tithe Farm, Laxfield Road

The following applications were refused planning permission:

2014/15 Option 1: outline planning permission for erection of one detached dwelling. Creation of shared vehicular access

Bell Vue, Harleston Hill

2325/15 Option 2: outline planning permission for erection of pair of semi-detached dwellings. Creation of shared vehicular access

Bell Vue, Harleston Hill

15.7.4 Other Planning Matters:

15.7.4.i the Clerk was asked to enquire about the endurance of Conservation Areas in villages (Fressingfield in particular). Philip Isbell stated he does not read government policy signalling a change at the moment.

15.7.4.ii mention was made of another Parish Plan; Gillian Benjamin of Community Action Suffolk now leads this area and would be willing to come out and address the PC on the subject. There were three areas of possible action: Neighbourhood Plan, Parish Plan, Village Statement. Philip Isbell and Nick Ward had confirmed the hierarchy of such plans from a planning perspective. It was agreed that a Neighbourhood Plan was unlikely to receive sufficient support from the village in terms of commitment but it was felt that there may be sufficient information from the HNS and the Open Day (held in September) to formulate a coherent Parish Plan/Statement. It was strongly suggested that a working party be established to look at all relevant information from the HNS and the data from the open meeting as this could provide sufficient information for the formulation of a Parish Plan/Statement.

15.7.4.iii Short Stay Stopping Sites – land is required by MSDC to fulfil the obligations placed upon it by central government

15.7.4.iv There will a planning meeting on 03 Nov

15.8 Matters of Report:

15.8.1 **Benches and Notice Boards** – ongoing; to be removed from the agenda until there was something to report

15.8.2 **Dog bins** – Chairman and Clerk to undertake site visit

15.8.3 **Defibrillator** – electrician contacted to install had not got back to the Clerk to arrange a site visit so efforts were underway to source another

15.8.4 **Speed Indicator signs** – information awaited from CM

15.8.5 **Training courses** – a two hour planning training course has been requested for 05 January 2016. The Clerks to Weybread and Metfield PCs had advised that there could be some interest in joining the course. It was suggested a small fee be charged to defray costs. Confirmation from SALC awaited.

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 JF; seconded WL; unanimous

15.9.2 Account balances at 30 September 2015:

Current account: £26,206.19

Tracker account: £19,793.00

Unpresented cheques not known

Balance at 30 September 2015: £45,999.19

15.9.3 Banking – change effected however, Barclays still had not sent statements or transferred the funds to Unity Trust so the balances could not be confirmed.

15.9.4 Budget and precept – the FGPWG met on 13 October and recommended a budget for 2016/17 with a precept of £15,500 for the coming FY. Documents circulated. Budget for approval at January meeting following any amendments (to be reported to the Clerk by 08 December 2015).

15.9.4.i The Clerk's gratuity was underfunded according to the equation used for the purpose. The Clerk had been asked to send her contract to SLCC for scrutiny to ensure payment of a gratuity would be allowable now the regulations had been changed. The Clerk would report findings to the Council.

15.9.5 A request had been made by Harleston Town Council for Car Parking contributions. A contribution would not be made at this time.

15.9.6 A request for funding had been received from SARS. Members would investigate to see if it benefitted Fressingfield before a decision was made.

15.9.7 As per FGPWG recommendations – an advert had been inserted in SixSense to invite tenders for all three grass cutting contracts.

15.9.8 BS kindly cleared up at the Sandpath/Laxfield Road corner, as requested. The debris was all garden waste and he took it all home and deposited it in his personal garden waste bin, for which he pays an annual fee. Members agreed unanimously that a small ex-gratia sum be added either to the next payment as a gesture of appreciation.

15.10 Emergency Planning – GD was to attend a conference on 13 November 2015 and would report back to the January meeting

15.11 Street Lighting - MR to report back to the January meeting

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

15.12.1 County Councillor – Cllr McGregor reported that a new Borough Surveyor was in post and GMcG would be meeting him to point out the state of the roads in the ward. They would be undertaking a tour to examine the defects more closely. The Clerk was asked to inform Cllr McGregor of any work required. **Clerk to action** A system was to be effected that would identify all properties not receiving broadband and this would be house-specific. Work continued with devolution. Under the Fire and Rescue Service Review it was clear that some fire stations were in danger of closure. The service was very efficient but was not as well funded as some that were less so. SCC was trying to regularise the Demand Responsive transport and thus gain greater value.

15.12.2 District Councillor – Cllr Hadingham’s report had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. The Devolution Bid was the main topic of the report. There was a great deal of negotiation to be undertaken between Suffolk and Norfolk to formulate a joint proposal. Nominations are open for the four categories of the Community Achievement Awards: Rising Star; Community Hero; Action in the Community; Outstanding Local Business. Nomination forms could be downloaded from the Mid Suffolk website.

15.12.3 Police – PCSO Long reported as follows: The Parish of Fressingfield has had no reported crime since the last meeting. The impending cuts are likely to affect what we as a Constabulary deal with, and expect a media release within the next few weeks when decisions are made. It is not known yet if the 44 Parishes currently covered by Eye Police Station will continue to have a ‘local’ station, or even a local team. It does appear that regular contact with local Officers will be a thing of the past as we become an organisation similar to Fire and Ambulance where we just respond to calls and prevent very little. Even my role is not safe, so unfortunately the next few years could well see a very large increase in crime due to there being no presence at all anywhere except big towns.

A letter had also been received (and circulated) from the temporary Chief Constable concerning future policing.

15.13 Social Club

The minutes of the September and October meetings had been circulated and were noted.

15.14 Playingfield Management Committee

The Secretary reported that the exterior painting had been completed and was a great improvement. The work had been completed in 3 days. A new sign had been erected on the front of the building. Those who had expressed an interest in the Play Area had been contacted. They intended to undertake research and had been provided with grant information. A copy of the RoSPA report had been passed on. It was hoped minor repairs would be undertaken. At the meeting held on 05 October 2015 it was agreed that a Village Fete should take place on 09 July 2016. John Cavilla would chair the committee and volunteers were already organising events, stalls, music, refreshments etc.. The ‘Fete Fund’ held by the FPMC had been transferred to the Sports and Social Club for this purpose. The report was noted.

15.15 Play Area

15.15.1 The maintenance of the grass, hedges etc at the Play Park must be considered. Vic Barley had been undertaking this task since April and the PC had been paying for the work. This could be included in the work for tender if the Council wished and all three areas (PF, Cem, PP) could be put out for tender at the same time. The Clerk was asked to liaise with FPMC. **Clerk to action**

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 at the edge of the footpath between New Street and Harleston Road. It was not the type of project that would be generally considered but if the PC were to pay it could likely proceed. Cost iro £500 (£750 for a double barrier). After a discussion it was agreed that this should be put in place, if at all possible. **Clerk to action**

15.17 Correspondence

15.17.1 letter from PCC thanking the PC for the annual grants

15.17.2 email from the Scout Leader – circulated

15.17.3 email from MSDC asking for suggestions for Gypsy and Traveller short stay stopping sites

15.17.4 company offering to undertake play equipment inspections & refurbishment

15.17.5 letter via SALC from Age Concern seeking nominations for its 'Unsung Heroes' award to celebrate an inspiring older person in the community. Information from the Clerk

15.17.6 email from SCDC - preferred options public consultation (19 October – 30 November 2015)

Site allocations and area specific policies; Felixstowe peninsula area action plan

Tabled items: Wicksteed Leisure brochure; RealiseFutures contact card; CAS Annual Review;

15.18 To Receive the Clerk's Report

15.18.1 The Clerk thanked the PC for its support of her attending the SLCC National Conference. It had, again, proved most informative. The Clerk had been appointed SLCC NEC representative for Suffolk to 2019.

15.18.2 email received concerning Roadside Nature Reserves (RNRs); it transpired there were 2 – 1 Fressingfield and 1 Fressingfield/Mendham but no warden. The job is a voluntary one and entails keeping an eye on the reserve throughout the year and advising SCC if the verge is cut at the wrong time, white posts are damaged/removed plus raking up after the Autumn cut. It was felt unnecessary to seek a volunteer warden.

15.18.3 SALC's AGM would be held on 12 November 2015 at Elmswell. No one was available to attend.

15.18.4 As a result of the Clerk's attendance at the National Conference the subject of Risk Assessment vis a vis the PC's outside spaces had come to her attention. Risk Assessment documents must be drawn up for any open space under the PC's physical jurisdiction; weekly checks need to be made so an audit trail could be established. Common sense measures should be applied at all times but it was necessary to protect the Council. The Clerk would suggest an inspection be made to draw up the RA document and also to inform the compilation of inspection documents where the regular checks could be recorded. In addition to weekly visual checks on equipment and surfaces an operational inspection should be undertaken every three months on the Play Park whereby wear and tear can be monitored. Even low level risk points should be addressed as soon as is practical. Without adequate risk assessment documents and an audit trail of inspections insurance cover could be removed if a claim were to be made. The Clerk was asked to liaise with the FPMC.

Clerk to action

15.18.5 Transparency Code – the Council had been made aware of changes to practice following the commencement of the Code. There was funding available to assist smaller councils with compliance – for purchase of websites, computers etc. The Council did not express a wish, at this time, to purchase its own equipment (which would then have to be regularly updated and replaced)? The Clerk would speak with the webmaster to determine the best way to ensure the correct documents were available online. The Asset Register would be updated by the Chairman and Clerk as this had to be posted online also. **Chairman & Clerk to action**

15.18.5.i The Clerk would advise that, when the time comes, Fressingfield PC signs on with the Sector Led Audit Company that was being formed to undertake the audit responsibilities following the demise of the Audit Commission. This was agreed in principle

15.18.6 Public Forum – when speaking with a new colleague the subject of the Public Forum was raised and SALC's recommendation was that the PF should take place within the body of the meeting so that the Chairman may retain control of proceedings at all times. If the forum was held before commencement of business or the meeting is closed to facilitate it all control is lost. This was contrary to previous advice and 'Charles Arnold Baker' made no such recommendation. Members agreed the status quo for Fressingfield should remain.

15.18.7 Potholes could be reported online to 'fixmystreet'. This should be publicised in SixSense

15.19 Matters of Information brought by the Chairman or Members:

15.19.1 HM The Queen's 90th birthday would take place in 2016 and celebrations were being organised. This would be brought to the attention of the Fete Committee.

15.19.2 Restoration work was being undertaken on Chippenhall Green and the work had been approved and agreed by the appropriate government authorities

15.20 There were no Matters for Inclusion in the Agenda for the of the Parish Council meeting at this time– 19 January 2016

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 21.23hrs

Signed: *PL Rush*
Chairman

19 January 2016